00035396

00035396

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 20 February, 2020

HISTORY OF CABINETS.

HISTORY OF CABINETS.

FROM THE UNION WITH SCOTLAND

TO THE

ACQUISITION OF CANADA AND

BENGAL.

35396 ac 269

BY

W. M. TORRENS.

VOLUME I.

TT. 11-9

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

LONDON:

W. H. ALLEN & CO., LIMITED

13, WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.,

Publishers to the India Office.

1894.

Gen
354.42
Tor / His
35396

WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED,
PRINTERS,
LONDON AND REDHILL.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR ARTHUR JOHN OTWAY, BART.

THESE VOLUMES ARE INSCRIBED

BY

HIS OLD AND FAITHFUL FRIEND.

TO THE READER.

SINCE the work which is now presented to the public was completed—indeed, just as the last proof sheets had been returned to the printers—its gifted author has passed away, struck down as it were by a spent bullet at the close of a long and brilliant battle. It is not necessary here to say how much the world of letters will miss him, or to give praise where hard work well done stands as a monument. But it may be permitted one who has been his constant companion during the last seven years which he devoted to the writing of the "History of Cabinets" to bear testimony, and offer admiration, to the ceaseless labour he bestowed upon it. While the book is mainly written from original MSS., no authority bearing on the period covered has been neglected, and many store-houses of literature have been ransacked for ounces of fact or illustration. Though, as an Irishman, Mr. Torrens felt strongly the lamentable results which have followed the misgovernment of his country in the last century, he never allowed himself to be biased in anything he wrote. It was his constant endeavour to present facts as they were, and where a Minister seems to be indicted, only out of his own mouth does he convict him.

The unfortunate affliction which was the indirect cause of the accident which so suddenly called him away prevented him seeing his own proofs or writing with his own hand; so that he

had largely to trust himself in the hands of others. Thus there may be crudities and small blunders which he would have remedied had his sight allowed him. No one but myself can know the intense interest he threw into the work, the sacrifices he made for it, the labour he bestowed upon it. It is a matter of intense regret to me that he has not lived to meet the judgment of the critics upon this, the work of his life; but I trust I may quote for Mr. Torrens—*Exegi monumentum aere perennius.*

H. B. ST. JOHN.

INTRODUCTION.

GOVERNMENT WITHOUT A CABINET.

1688-1714.

William of Orange—Parliament confers the Crown but retains the Sceptre—Division of Offices—Ministers but no Ministry—King attempts Legislation—Queen Mary and her Advisers—Irish Forfeitures—Marlborough in the Tower—Triennial Act—Legislative Veto—Treaty of Ryswick—Parliament Annuls Royal Grants—Accession of Anne—Government by Junto—Marlborough's Supremacy—Further Limitations of the Prerogative—Union with Scotland—Rival Junto—Death of Right Divine.

IF the story of Administrative rule as it has come to be recognised amongst us is to be faithfully told, it must be written from the inside. The purpose and spirit of those who have from time to time combined to bear the burthen of empire can only be learned from what they have said or written one to another, or to the few partakers of their confidence whose counsel and aid they have severally found indispensable. The range of original material, under all circumstances limited, dwindles provokingly as we look back, and the historic nuggets worth recovering from the obliterating sands of forgetfulness become scarcer, though not less intrinsically valuable, as we ascend the stream. But, happily, all the descendants of those who have borne an eminent part in affairs have not scattered the relics and records of their dead, and from private collections and

public archives we may gradually find our way to a just estimate of Ministries gone by.

From the dark winter's night when James II. fled by the water-gate from his Palace of Whitehall, to the summer morning when the last of his House that wore a crown sank peacefully to rest at Kensington, the chroniclers count near five-and-twenty years, and impatient questioners of the past are given to antedate the form of Government under which our country has since then grown from a secondary island realm to be the greatest Empire in the world, as if the administrative power had come into being with the advent of the Stadtholder-King, and had arrived at maturity under Godolphin and Harley. But, like most other things that have won and kept a lasting hold of national confidence and respect, government by Cabinet was not a cunning device aforethought, or announced as a discovery on or about a particular day in the almanac. No group or body of advisers deserving that distinctive appellation is recognisable in the reign of William or of Anne. Neither during the interregnum, when the transfer of the Crown was pending, nor after its legislative disposal, was there any effective combination of influential men in office capable of exercising the duties and responsibilities of executive rule.

After long and anxious deliberation, the Prince of Orange undertook to lead the nobility and gentry in resisting grievous and glaring abuses of prerogative by their hereditary Sovereign. But it soon became plain that he did not mean what they meant, and that they meant what he did not mean. The grandson of Charles I. and the son-in-law of James II., he had for years looked forward to his wife's accession to her father's throne, and, careful to guard her title as heiress presumptive, he had strained to the utmost his influence in 1680 with his personal friends in England to oppose the Exclusion Bill. Mary had, moreover, voluntarily engaged never to accept any position or exercise any authority that might come to her by inheritance incompatible with the obedience she owed him as

his wife, and when, by circumstances none could have foreseen, he found himself at Windsor at the head of an unopposed army, and was hailed as the deliverer of the nation, he felt, no doubt, that the great opportunity of his life was come, and that not merely a second Stadtholderate was within his reach, but an ancient Crown. Discussion for a time prevailed as to whether he should be king or regent, to which he put an end by saying he was ready to return to his own land, but that he would stay in England only if recognised as Sovereign. Sooner than palter with their fugitive lord, or begin a second time a Commonwealth, the majority of the Convention agreed to offer him the Throne, with the granddaughter of Charles I. for Queen Consort; and the oath of allegiance to King James by right Divine was transformed by Statute into one of fealty to William and Mary. Parliament thus conferred the Crown, but William soon found that they meant to retain the sceptre.

In the memorable decision neither Peers nor Representatives of Ireland or Scotland had any voice, and their appendant Parliaments could only reiterate the resolution passed at Westminster. There existed at the time but one hundred and seventy-six English Peers, of whom one hundred and ten only[1] were present in the Convention; and, making allowance for minors, invalids, and those who were abroad, it may be taken that one third of the Lords spiritual and temporal were absent.[2]

Instead of definite stipulations by Parliament and guarantees for the observance of explicit laws on the part of the Prince, Somers, in the Declaration of Rights, put together an exhaustive enumeration of the misdemeanours and misuses of prerogative that had compelled the deposing of James, and there, with certain compliments to the Prince, he left it. It was, in fact, a declaration of wrongs, not of rights. Its greatest eulogist says that it made nothing law which was not law before.[3]

[1] MSS. of House of Lords in 12th Rept. Hist. MSS. Com.

[2] See Lords' Journals, January and February, 1689.

[3] Macaulay's "Hist.," Chap. X.

After twelve years of troubled dreaming of kingship, it would have been strange if, on waking at Windsor, William had doubted his being at last a monarch, even as his predecessors had been. Was not the audible expression of his will to be indispensable in the making of any new law,—a warrant in his name indispensable in the enforcing of any old one? Was he not henceforth to be the fountain of honour, the giver of office, the paymaster of service—ecclesiastical, civil, and military? In the first days of power, was it not natural that he should think of those whom he knew best? Natural enough; but the preference cost him dear. On the foreign members of his staff he conferred high rank and lucrative office. Count Bentinck was made Groom of the Stole and Earl of Portland, Marshal Schomberg was made Master-General of the Ordnance and created a duke, and Henry de Nassau Auverquerque, his uncle's natural son, Master of the Horse, and subsequently Earl of Grantham; while Generals Rouvigny and Ginckel had military commands and Irish peerages, and Count Zuylestein had honours culminating in the Earldom of Rochford.

The conduct of Foreign Affairs had always been regarded as the peculiar function of the Sovereign. Charles I. had been as absolute as Elizabeth in diplomacy, and no branch of the prerogative was clutched more exclusively by Cromwell. Even indolent and idle Charles II. took the trouble of choosing for himself his representatives abroad, read their despatches, and snubbed Ambassadors who presumed to deviate from instructions. For expostulating against too easy compliance with French intrigues, Sir G. Downing was sharply reproved,—"I have seen all your letters to my Lord Arlington, and have thought fit to send you my last mind upon the hinge of your whole negotiations, and in my own hand, that you may know it is your part to obey punctually my orders, instead of putting yourself to the trouble of finding reasons why you do not do so."[1] William believed himself more fit than any of those about

[1] From *Whitehall*, 16th January, 1672.—Stowe *MSS.*

him to have charge of the heirlooms of Foreign policy and war, and he resolved to retain them in his own hands. For the rest, he was willing to let the triumphant nobles who had invited him over, and who possessed controlling influence in Parliament, to divide amongst them the other trusts and dignities of State. Halifax, pre-eminent in attainments and abilities, expected to be President of the Council, and he was but half satisfied with the Privy Seal. But Danby's claims were paramount, for without his decisive support William probably would not have come, or, if he had, Nottingham and Godolphin would hardly have given him theirs. He had been Lord Treasurer under Charles II., and longed to resume irresponsible control over the finances. But for that very reason, as well as from a sense of his incurable unpopularity, neither King nor future colleagues would agree. He was fain to acquiesce in the Lord Presidency, with a marquisate and a dukedom in perspective. Herbert, who had convoyed William to Torbay, was mortified at being refused the Admiralty on account of his depraved habits, and he was only appeased by a grant of 3,000 acres in Cambridgeshire and the title of viscount. Pembroke, an upright and fearless man, whose shortcoming in Royal eyes was his lack of ambition, became First Lord, and Admiral Russell Treasurer of the Navy. Churchill, whose change of sides at a critical moment had been of signal importance, was made Lieutenant-General and Earl of Marlborough. On wavering Shrewsbury and unyielding Nottingham devolved the duties of Secretaries of State, and, without actual quarrel, they contrived to perform their respective functions independently. To three eminent Judges of the Common Law was confided the custody of the Great Seal, that James fancied he had drowned in the Thames; and the Treasury being put in commission, Mordaunt and Delamere insisted on having the first and second places at the Board, for which they were strangely unfitted, Godolphin, as Junior Lord, doing the business of the department. Devonshire became Lord Steward,

and Dorset Lord Chamberlain, with Sir J. Lowther for his Deputy.

Parliament, which had thrown away the opportunity at the Restoration of asserting a paramount control in taxation and finance, resolved not to do so again. To the surprise and chagrin of William, the Civil List and the Estimates of the various departments of State were voted for twelve months only. The Commons had the power of the purse, and they proved inexorable in their determination to keep it. His income as Prince of Orange and Stadtholder was £63,000 a-year, and the Commons thought they were behaving handsomely in multiplying that sum by ten. But were the new officials a Cabinet? When summoned to the Royal Closet, it was to afford information and receive instructions. No record was made of their assembling, and in Westminster Hall nobody knew for certain who came thither.[1] In the administration of the three not yet united Kingdoms, as in the Seven United Provinces, William was resolved there should be no Prime Minister. Every other dignity and title is spoken of freely in the confidential letters of the time, but this is never mentioned, nor does the institution of a Cabinet seem to have been thought of. William would ask no man to form a Government for him, for he wanted Ministers, not a Ministry.

A Cabinet would have been invaluable to a Prince in his position, not only to guard him from sanctioning impulsively advice which the majority of his Ministers in Parliament did not scruple to overbear, but because, when protest or upbraiding came from either House in the gilt-edged paraphrase of an Address, it would have been certain to take the shape of complaint against his Cabinet Councillors, instead of by direct implication against him. The evasion resorted to of laying the blame on "whoever might have given wrong advice" without fixing the burthen of responsibility anywhere, was too thin to deceive the most careless observer. Equally futile and foolish has been

[1] Luttrell's Diary.

the pretence set up later of saying that the undisguised dissensions in the Royal Closet were only like what our own day has excused under the title of open questions. In our sense of the term, open questions did not exist, for the best of all reasons—that Closet differences under the seal of confidence, and the obligation to act together on the decision taken, were practically unknown. With the exception of the Toleration Act, which was, after all, rather the waving of an oriflamme than the initiation of a policy, few important acts of legislation were unanimously approved by holders of high office.

Though mainly occupied with military and foreign affairs, William's superior energy of character led him to meddle personally in the administration of various departments. When complaints reached him of delays in paying the troops, he would ride down to the Treasury and inquire into the cause, and wait until he saw the order issued which the public service required.[1] It is easy to imagine how attempts to assert his right to a personal share in departmental business must have been resented. Had noblemen and gentlemen risked their heads and imperilled their estates to be called to book in this fashion by a reticent and overbearing Dutchman?

Kingcraft, by Divine Right, implied that the Sovereign was the thinking head of the State. Parliaments were told by Elizabeth that their function lay in developing measures she laid before them, and the initiative in legislation was claimed by the Stuarts to the last. Dreaming at first that the Royal garb turned inside out invested him with undiminished powers, William hastily undertook to reorganise the Church by enabling its preferments to be shared by Nonconformists. Nottingham in his name introduced a Bill for that purpose, without the approval of other Ministers. Shrewsbury and Carmarthen disdained compliance; walked out of the House of Lords on the first critical division, and sanctioned the subsequent resistance that caused the Measure to be laid aside.

[1] Luttrell's Diary, II., 30.

William chafed and fumed a while, and then submitted, for he had no choice. The fine gold of his popularity grew dim, and as yet he had achieved nothing to regild the *prestige* of his name. He summoned the officials to Kensington, and told them he meant to retire into Holland, leaving the Queen to try what she could do where he had failed. All concurred in deprecating such a design, and held out hopes of accommodation. He gave way, but when he announced his intention of putting himself at the head of the army in Ireland, objections to his quitting the capital arose. Some were even for moving Addresses in both Houses, upon the ground that he ought not to risk his life in the field, or his health in a damp climate.

"They are afraid," he wrote to Bentinck, "to lose their tool before they have done their work; as to their friendship, you know what it is worth."[1] His unaccustomed bondage grew so irksome that he bethought him of more than one device for loosening if not breaking it. If his wishes were neglected, or baffled, when expressed at Kensington, how would they be treated when received from a distant camp? The Queen, whom he had jealously excluded from all share in the Executive, must be invested with plenary powers of rule in his absence, not that she was likely to be able to assert such authority, but that its failure would be less mortifying in her hands than in his own. A Special Act was passed accordingly. He asked his Consort to choose whether, in his absence, all should be left to the Privy Council, or they should have directions to refer everything to her. She said the two things were the same, for being wholly a stranger to business they must do all. On the eve of his departure[2] the nine Officers of State were summoned to Whitehall, and the Queen and Government committed to their care. To her it was an exigency for which she felt herself unequal; for those in whom she must confide were known to differ widely among themselves, as did the more numerous members of the

[1] To Portland, 20th January, 1690.

[2] 2nd June, 1690.

Privy Council, of which it has sometimes been imagined that they were a Committee; though nothing is more certain than that they were neither nominated by, nor held responsible to, them.

"With all her sense of inexperience in affairs, Mary was not blinded by the airs of departmental wisdom likely to be assumed by more than one of her several advisers. "Carmarthen was the person the King had particularly recommended to me, and he was one to whom I must ever own great obligations; yet of a temper I can never like. Devonshire the King had likewise recommended as one who might be trusted and must be complimented; Dorset, too lazy to give himself the trouble of business, so of little use; Pembroke as mad as most of his family, though very good-natured and a man of honour, but not very steady. Nottingham was suspected by some as not true to the Government, though, in the post he has, he must do all. The King believed him an honest man, though he was thought too violent for his party. Mordaunt[1] is mad, and his wife, who is madder, governs him. I know him deeply engaged in Scotland, and not much to be trusted; yet he must know all. I will say nothing of Marlborough, because 'tis he I could say the most of. Sir John Lowther, a very honest but weak man; Admiral Russell was most recommended to me for sincerity, yet he has his faults."[2]

Of this Council of Public Safety, in the most critical hours of the new reign, but three had signed the Invitation from which it sprang, while as many were half suspected of looking back unto Egypt. Even the perplexed Queen confessed the want of unity of purpose and tendency that prevailed among her severally independent Councillors. How the distraction was held within control and by whose firmness the Government was preserved from wreck, we may conjecture, but we shall probably never know. William's advice was that in the hour of need his trem-

[1] Afterwards Peterborough.

[2] Diary of Queen Mary.

bling consort should be guided rather by Carmarthen than any of the rest. More perhaps than any other man, he had contributed to make her Queen of England; and as little certainly as any man he could afford that she should be discrowned. With great knowledge and courage he combined great insight into the motives of others, and a habitual reticence that accounted in no small degree for their distrust and aversion. Saturnine, money-making, and cynical, he took little heed of Mary's filial or conjugal unhappiness.

The anxieties of Mary during the panic caused by the defeat of Beachy Head, and her impatience for her husband's return from Ireland after the victory of the Boyne, equally arose from the distracted counsels given her. For an hour they seemed to agree with spirit, but she soon saw them relapse into their normal condition of difference and disagreement. She had thought at first the characteristics given of them by William rather morbid, but she admitted her error. "I thought you had given me wrong characters of men, but I now see they answer your expectation of being as little of a mind as of a body."[1]

Before leaving Dublin, William appointed Sidney and Coningsby Lords Justices, and to them confided the civil administration of the Kingdom, with Ginckel for General and Sir C. Porter, an eminent practitioner from Lincoln's Inn, for Chancellor. Whispers early prevailed at Court that the personal favourites of the King would make their fortunes by grants out of the Irish forfeitures. The struggle was not over; but already Ministers heard rumours of ill augury; and, half incredulous, learned that without their privity vast appropriations were being made of estates in Ireland. Anxious for his return, they were in no mood to raise in correspondence a controversy with William on the subject; and they were willing probably to treat the sinister reports as exaggerated. But Mary had reasons of her own for fearing their truth. She was diffident in offering advice, timid and self-effacing to a fault. But ten years' experience of her

[1] To the King, July, 1690.

husband's ways and weaknesses prompted her to depart from her usual reserve ; and inspired a warning to which it had been well for his reputation if he had given heed. "I have been desired to beg you not to be too quick in parting with confiscated estates, but consider whether you will not keep some for public schools to instruct the poor Irish. For my part, I must needs say that I think you would do very well if you would consider what care can be taken of the poor souls there, if you will give me leave to say so, after the great deliverance you have had."[1] William gave no explanation of his purpose ; and on his return the invidious topic was allowed to sleep.

Next year the Queen was again left alone to preside in the meetings of ministers at Kensington, and to seek advice day by day from each of them on affairs of his special department. She bore herself worthily amid a sea of troubles. Perplexity and anxiety breathe in every page of her journals and letters. "She saw all those she was to trust, together by the ears ; and a general peevishness in them all except Sidney."[2]

In a moment of panic at rumours of a plot, Marlborough was dismissed from his employments and committed to the Tower. To justify the proceeding, an obscure informer named Young was released from Newgate, where he lay on charges of perjury and forgery, to make the required affidavit. Devonshire, Bradford, and Montagu refused in Council to sign the warrant for the General's committal ; and Bradford (Treasurer of the Household), to mark his sense of the transaction, visited Marlborough in captivity. At first there was difficulty in finding eligible bail, but at length Shrewsbury, Burlington, Carbery, and Halifax, shocked at the humiliation of such a man, offered, and could not be refused. An intercepted letter, in which the Earl had reflected on the King's partiality to the Dutch, is said by Burnet to have been the immediate cause of Marlborough's arrest, but no distinct charge was ever publicly stated. Such an exercise of the pre-

[1] To the King, 25th July, 1690.

[2] Diary of the Queen.

rogative touched too nearly the self-interest of all who were engaged in public employment. To what end had they risked lives and fortunes to bring about a Revolution if without reason assignable, or at least without reason assigned, the foremost of them might be thus cashiered and incarcerated? Russell, though differing in party from Marlborough, lived with him on terms of intimacy and confidence. He regarded his dismissal as little short of an affront put upon himself, and in no measured terms he rated his Majesty for thus treating one of those who had "put the Crown upon his head." He said he would go no more to sea or take any responsibility under a Government in which he could not confide. Burnet tried to soften his ill-humour, but, as he owned, did not succeed. After some weeks in the Tower, the truth was made plain, and Marlborough was set free, with due expressions of regret. But Joseph's official coat of many colours had meantime been parted among less notable comrades. A Bill met with much favour providing new securities against malicious or arbitrary charges of treason, the most valuable of which were that in future the accused should be entitled to a copy of the indictment, that witnesses should be heard in his defence upon oath, and that no overt act should be provable upon the trial which had not been set forth in the indictment. The old principle of common law was confirmed specifically, that no man should be adjudged guilty of treason as a principal or accomplice, save on the concurrent oaths of two witnesses. The King urged the adoption of a new oath of abjuration, but the majority of the Commons were not in the mood for further measures of sectarian exclusion, and the project was abandoned. One by one the powers of the prerogative, capable of being used oppressively, were shorn away; and the Stadtholder more than ever felt that if the chiefs of Parliament had given him a crown they meant to retain the sceptre.

The phrase "Cabinet Council" was sometimes applied to those who were summoned to confer together on affairs of

moment at the instance of the King, and generally in his presence. But in its nature it was essentially a consultative, not an administrative body. It had no separate or permanent head, and homogeneity of opinions upon the great questions of the day does not appear to have been required; while the conventional liability to be summoned was confessedly dependent upon the pleasure of the Crown, varying and shifting as it did from time to time. To be named a Privy Councillor by announcement in the *Gazette* was the conferring of high political rank for life, and, though like the Lieutenancies of Counties or Commissions of the Peace, it might be put an end to by the summary and irresponsible act of the Sovereign, no man was, in point of fact, divested of it save for some offence given to the Court, or for public misconduct so called. William is believed to have cherished from the first the idea of a legislative union of the three Kingdoms. Whatever were his faults or prejudices, sectarian bigotry was not amongst them; and he was too sagacious not to covet the allegiance of the Catholic community by amnesty to their territorial chiefs and freedom of intercourse to the traders in their towns. If the forfeited estates were not to be restored they might be redistributed, as had been done in Ulster a century before, among gentry, *mesne* tenants and yeomanry, and thus the graduated elements of middle-class life, sorely needed, would have been engrafted in social organisation. But his courtiers had other views. They had no to-morrow. They cared nothing for what might happen in time to come, or of the disastrous effect of a system of absenteeism, disfranchisement, and official monopoly. The Stadtholder King was forced, however, to abandon his dream of legislative tri-union; and was beguiled into giving over the fruits of victory in civil war to the flatterers and intriguers about him.

Sidney, when proceeding to Ireland as Viceroy, was attended by a brilliant retinue, and took Althorpe on his way. The rumour thence arose that Sunderland would succeed his nephew in confidential office at Whitehall, and the Queen was persuaded to

acquiesce in an order releasing the Earl from his liability to replace eight thousand ounces of silver taken by him from the Jewel Office in 1688, and carried beyond sea. The instrument passed the Treasury, but was probably never submitted to the majority of those in high office who disliked and feared him.

In the Session of 1692-3 both wings of Opposition flapped the infirm Executive in the face for its obvious indecision in the orders to the Fleet regarding a descent on the French coast which had failed. Foley and Musgrave were cheered by the country gentlemen when they scoffed at the impotence of what they termed a "cabal" that usurped the authority of the Privy Council which in old times used, they said, to be consulted on all great affairs. Foley urged that the great affairs of Government for some time past had been unsuccessfully managed, and that the King should be moved for the future to employ men of known integrity and fidelity. He would have every Minister put his signature for or against the advice to be acted upon. Strickland said he could not tell where it was we were wounded, but he would not have the management in such hands for the future. This could not be if we had a Cabinet Council. Waller said "Cabinet Council" was not to be found in our law books. We knew it not before; we took it for a nick-name. Temple said all Governments reduced their Executive to a few. The Dutch did so, and the French King's Councillors were but three. The question proposed was: that the King be advised that all matters of State should be considered in the Privy Council, and that the management of them by a "cabal" was dangerous. Lowther asked what would foreigners think of such a debate? It was a familiar pleasantry among envoys resident here that England was the safest place for diplomatists, for once a year Parliament sat, when everything of moment was disclosed. For his own part, he would often rather be at home, but the resolution for referring everything to the entire Privy Council he thought wholly impracticable in the way of business. The resolution was not put to a division, and it does not appear in

the journals.[1] The ill-humour of the hour evaporated in the cloud of censure on administrative mismanagement. Nobody as yet clearly saw his way to commute an ever-varying crowd of Privy Councillors in the tapestried closet at Kensington for a co-optative board sitting at the Cockpit without the presence of the King.

A plausible resource of opposition lay in attack on the notoriety of corruption and in demands for the shortening of Parliaments. Never were ingredients better compounded for a stimulating popular draught. The cry went well, and its influence did not cease till it had carried the Triennial Act. If William could not initiate legislative measures to his mind, he hoped to be able to modify or baffle those he disliked by securing a sufficient number of adherents in each House who would ratify and promote his ever-widening plans of Continental alliance and intervention. From of old the duration of Parliaments was for the life of the King, save when he chose to resort to a Dissolution; but a monarch like William was less likely every year to indulge in a prerogative whereby his investments in senatorial opinion must be often thrown away. A second Triennial Bill was debated in the Commons with no little heat, but 210 to 132 were for reading it a second time, and it passed through Committee without alteration. But the King's antipathy was inappeasable, and the question arose how its further progress could be arrested and the difficulty eluded of his being obliged to give it his veto or assent.

Many Tories favoured a Triennial Bill, and wealthy Whigs a Place Bill, which was passed almost unanimously in the Lower House, and only rejected in the Upper by three.[2] Marlborough and Prince George of Denmark were in the minority, and neither Shrewsbury nor Carmarthen voted. The King, mortified at the proposal of changes so vital, came down to the House, and from his gilded and curtained box listened to the debates. But

[1] "Parl. Hist.," 21st Nov., 1692.

[2] Lords' Journals, 3rd Jan., 1693.

the Peers were equally balanced, and, in spite of William's known aversion, Pembroke, Carmarthen, and even Burnet, personally registered their approval. "You will live to repent the part you are taking in this matter,"[1] said his Majesty. For the time the Bill was lost, but the question would not die.

The second Place Bill differed materially from the first in not being retrospective. It disabled all who should take office after 1694 from sitting or voting. The Lords added "*unless again chosen*"; and the Commons agreed to an amendment which changed obviously the scope of the measure. William still refused to yield, and formally laid aside the Bill.[2] The Lower House broke forth in loud murmurings, and resolved that "whoever advised the King not to give the Royal assent was an enemy to their Majesties and the Kingdom." Had there been a recognised Cabinet, the Commons could not have helped denouncing them; and had such a Council possessed an acknowledged head, they could not have avoided impugning him. In truth, there was neither Cabinet nor Prime Minister to stand between Sovereign and Parliament; but such a protest against the exercise of the Veto was too serious to be forgotten.

The answer of William to an angry address was conciliatory but evasive. Foley, as Leader of the Opposition, declared that though his Majesty professed to have a great regard for the Constitution, he appeared not to understand its nature, which he might take to be to reject Bills of ever so just grievances. He therefore moved an Address for a further answer, which a majority shrank from adopting, as tending to an open collision between Crown and Commons, an extremity for which few were prepared. Nobody spoke or thought of what we should call a change of Ministry in consequence of this refusal to agree with Parliament, for the best of all reasons, that no such authority, responsible for the conduct of the Sovereign, then existed. Parliament had clearly the power to pass undiscriminating

[1] Danby's "Letters," Introduction, 1710.

[2] 25th Jan., 1694.

Place Bills, and the Monarch had as clearly the legal powers to reject them. The device for bringing the three branches of the Legislature into accord had not yet been discovered; and if we would read history aright, we must not interpolate political facts or anticipate Constitutional progress.

A third Place Bill was rejected in the Commons by 142 to 75, and there ended the futile controversy.

Before again quitting England for the camp, William felt it indispensable to reinforce the Civil Government, which from its total want of unity had proved signally incapable of guiding or controlling either House of Parliament. He once more resorted to Shrewsbury for help, but found him alike inaccessible to flattery and expostulation. His health, he averred, and perhaps believed, would not permit him to resume the labours of Secretary of State, and his disenchantment with public ambition was such, that if he had a son, he would sooner bring him up to the business of a hangman than to that of a politician. But female influences prevailed after all; and, with a dukedom, he once more accepted the Seals;[1] his first act being to lay upon the table a Bill, concerted with his friend Lord Keeper Somers, limiting the duration of the existing and every future English Parliament to three years. The King gave way, and the measure became law at the end of the Session. The conferences in presence of the Queen at Kensington during the King's absence abroad were as much as ever proofs of the want of Ministerial unity. There was no doubt a fluctuating agreement as to who should be summoned, or who should not. But, as the distinction was neither definitely nor inflexibly marked, and the practice in point of fact suffered to grow up gradually, it bore upon it the irregularities of feature incident to things that owe their ultimate form to circumstance and usage, and that are fashioned by shifting needs rather than in conformity with any theory or plan In the letters from the new Secretary of State to the King at Loo, the expression Cabinet Council sometimes occurs, but with-

[1] March, 1694.

out any indication of who took part. Great doubts existed in Shrewsbury's mind as to the subjects on which they were to be allowed to confer, and how far it was desirable during the summer to call them together at all.

The Session of 1696 witnessed the exercise once more of the enfeebled but not yet extinguished Prerogative of Veto. A Bill prescribing a property qualification for Members of Parliament of £500 a year and other tests of eligibility being passed by both Houses, was laid aside by the King when giving his assent to various projects of law. A resolution of censure on those who had advised him was therefore proposed in the Commons; but, lest it should lead to a quarrel with the King, a plot against whose life had recently been discovered, it was rejected by a large majority,[1] and Parliament was prorogued. Misconstruing, however, their forbearance, William wrote from Breda[2] urging the re-assembling of Parliament to authorise the Treasury to accept payment of taxes in guineas at twenty-four or twenty-five shillings. "Things had come to such a pass that Government must not be too scrupulous; if money were not soon found to pay and feed the troops abroad, all would be lost." But no casual triumphs in the field numbed the painful sense of discontent at the prolongation of the war. Neither Godolphin's skill in finance nor Montagu's dexterity in debate could persuade the Commons to sanction an expenditure daily shown to be profitless and endless; and every day Royal demands for further supplies grew more importunate and more impossible. After seven years spent in costly and sanguinary war, France as well as England sighed for peace. William was the last convert to its necessity; but finding the difficulties daily increasing of supplies to maintain his often vanquished troops in Flanders, and weary of humiliating appeals to his English Ministers to combine for the maintenance of a crusade that seemed interminable, he opened negotiations early in 1697, which resulted in the

[1] 24th April, 1696.

[2] To Shrewsbury, 4th June, 1696

Treaty of Ryswick. His title to the throne of the three Kingdoms was formally acknowledged by Louis XIV.; and after a vain protest on their behalf, the French and German Protestants were left to their fate. The exiled Stuarts were still to be treated with the honours of Royalty, but France would no longer furnish them with the means of conspiracy, or the weapons of invasion; while Mary of Modena was guaranteed the payment of £50,000 a year from the English Treasury, not only as her jointure, but during the lifetime of James, on the fantastic plea that he was henceforth to be reckoned as dead to the nation.[1] Territorially, England acquired nothing, and, in the main, things were restored to the footing on which they stood at the Peace of Nimeguen. The people generally were glad to see an end put to the struggle, and on his return from Holland in November, the King was received by the populace with more good humour than ordinarily. But no pretence of unity in Council was made respecting the Treaty, and no abstinence of reproach was affected by those who were not consulted towards those who were privy to it. Sunderland, in a fit of terror at being called to account in Parliament, where his enemies were legion, resigned the Gold Key of Chamberlain; while Shrewsbury, disdainful of opinion, from his retreat at Eyforth, whence he directed the business of his office through his deputy Vernon, vainly advised that, to please the King, Sunderland should be brought back.

Portland, with a splendid retinue, the cost of which he bore at his own expense, was sent to Versailles to realise befittingly the recognition of his master as one of the crowned kings of Christendom. While there he was sounded on a secret compact regarding the Spanish succession in the probable event of the death of the King of Spain. Some months later the project was circumstantially laid before William, during his residence at Loo, by Count Tallard; and the outlines were agreed on of what eventually became known as the Partition Treaty, which materially modified the map of Europe recently settled at

[1] Burnet.

Ryswick. The design was communicated, under the seal of the strictest confidence, by William to Chancellor Somers, with permission to confer only with such few as he might deem indispensable.

"If it be fit this negociation should be carried on, there is no time to be lost, and you will send me the full powers under the Great Seal, with the names in blank, to treat with Count Tallard. I believe that this may be done secretly, and that none but Vernon and those to whom you may communicate it, may have knowledge of it; so that the clerks who are to write the warrant and the full powers may not know what it is. According to all intelligence, the King of Spain cannot outlive the month of October, and the least accident may carry him off any day. Be always assured of my friendship.—WILLIAM REX."[1]

There cannot be a more signal proof of the non-existence of the political mechanism which popularly has come to be called the Government—or Cabinet—than the fact that William negotiated and concluded the Partition Treaty without the knowledge of the majority of his Ministers. Daring as he was in the pursuit of his life-long schemes of foreign policy, he would never have committed himself to an act so important and so incapable of ultimate concealment, had he supposed that it would be looked upon as a breach of constitutional faith. Somers was, moreover, the last man who, to gratify regal whim, would have become a party to an act that against envious and able rivals in the Lords he could not defend. The sudden and clandestine conclusion of the Treaty was indeed impugned as impolitic, and Somers provoked the jealousy of more than one member of his own party by his reticence during the affair. But it was never seriously contended that he had broken any actual or implied confidence with the other holders of high office. He consulted Orford, Montagu, and Shrewsbury before formally acquiescing in what he was asked to do.

[1] From Loo, August, 1698.

They concurred in warning the King that "there was a great deadness and want of spirit in the nation, who were not disposed to enter into a new war, and that the people seemed to be tired of taxes, as was seen in the late elections." They presumed his Majesty would not think of naming Commissioners in the matter who were not English born or naturalised subjects; but before their response was received, the Treaty had been signed[1] by Portland and Sir J. Williamson, Pensionary Heinsius and Count Tallard; the utmost secrecy being observed with the view of keeping the Courts of Vienna and Madrid in the dark. The Confederate Powers mutually engaged that on the death of Charles II., Naples, Sicily, and Guipuscoa, without any reference to the will of their inhabitants, were to be severed from the Spanish Monarchy and added to that of France, as the price of the Dauphin's renunciation of heirship to a second Bourbon Crown.

The distrust, if not disdain, manifested by William for the other chiefs of departments, who were kept in ignorance of a negotiation that when complete might commit the country to another European war, hardly admits of explanation, save upon the ground that collectively they were recognised as possessing no Executive voice or responsibility; and that the conduct of affairs, diplomatic and military, was still left in the Sovereign's hands. Had there been a Cabinet, it would have been the manifest duty of the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call its members together and consult them before complying with the singular requisition thus made; and if they had not been consulted on a matter of such moment, it would have been the duty of the contemned majority to resign. It does not appear that any of them thought of doing so. A sense of their growing weakness and unpopularity contributed probably to their acquiescence in William's foreign policy and their submission to the querulous parsimony that showed itself in the acts of the new Parliament. Godolphin had retired from the

[1] 4th September, 1698, at Loo.

Treasury in despair of being able to baffle the devices for jobbing whereby he was daily beset, and had made way for Montagu, whose head was turned by his elevation and whose vanity provoked incessant ridicule and censure by his ostentatious mode of living. His inexhaustible fluency of speech failed to convince or control the Tories led by Harley, who were now preponderant, and in a sudden misgiving of displacement he conferred the Tellership of the Exchequer, worth £5,000 a year for life, on his brother, reserving privately the bulk of the sinecure income to himself. Opposition took William at his word, that the Treaty of Loo had secured the peace of Europe; and insisted, therefore, that two-thirds of the army should be disbanded, and that the Blue Dutch Guards should be sent home. William expostulated eagerly and angrily, but in vain; and at length prepared a farewell Speech from the Throne, full of bitter reproaches, which Somers, with difficulty, dissuaded him from delivering. But Vernon was unable to induce the Commons to vote more than seven thousand infantry in the Mutiny Bill; and the only legislative sop to commercial discontent out of doors was the embodiment in statutable form of a promise by William that he would do all in his power to put down the woollen manufacture in Ireland.

New difficulties arose at the industrial monopoly thus decreed. The inefficiency of Lord Winchester as one of the Lords Justices left the conduct of provincial affairs entirely in the hands of Galway, who favoured the placing of the Huguenot regiments on the Irish Establishment against the advice of Shrewsbury and Somers. William unbosomed himself to his favourite Lord Justice, and confided to him his real intentions. "I have not writ to you all this winter, by reason of my vexation at what passed in Parliament, and because of the uncertainty I was under to know what to send you. It is not possible to be more sensibly touched than I am, at my not being able to do more for the poor Refugee officers, who have

served me with so much zeal and fidelity. I am afraid the good God will punish the ingratitude of this nation. I could hardly get the Establishment of Ireland passed, as it will be sent you.[1] I am perfectly satisfied with your conduct, and hope now you will be left undisturbed. I fear the Commission given here by the Commons for the inspection of Forfeitures will give you a great deal of trouble. Assuredly, on all sides, my patience is put to the trial; and I am going to breathe a little beyond sea.'[2]

Versed in all the maxims and expedients of the old Court, Sunderland encouraged his Royal pupil in the exercise of what remained of the prerogative, especially in the granting, without asking Ministerial leave, estates in England as well as Ireland. Bentinck thus obtained a concession of two-thirds of the county of Denbigh, which had formerly been a portion of the appanage of the Prince of Wales. As that dignity was no longer recognised in point of law, why should not the rents and profits be given to the trusted though taciturn friend who had shared all the Prince's toils and dangers, but for whom, as a foreigner, it was difficult otherwise to provide? And this was at a time when the deepening deficiency occasioned by the war rendered indispensable the imposition of a new and unpopular burthen in the form of a Window Tax. The Commons voted the impost on light and air, but they broke out in upbraiding the ill-advisers of Bentinck's grant. A great stir was made in Wales, where local factions joined in Celtic unison to protest against their fields and mines being, for the first time in the annals of the Principality, alienated to a foreigner. A deputation of the principal gentry of the county represented that the Lordships of Denbigh, Bromfield, and Yale had ever been set apart as a demesne of the Prince of Wales, and, when there was no heir to the Crown, had been vested in the King as *usufructure*, not as property, till there should be a male heir to the throne: being too great to be given

[1] Of twelve thousand men.

[2] William III. to Galway, January 1st, 1699.

over to any stranger, for Welshmen were never subject to any but to God and the King. Godolphin asked if there was not a precedent in the reign of Elizabeth, who had granted one of these manors to the Earl of Leicester; which Sir R. Cotton owned was true; but he added that the sedition thereby bred was so inappeasable that the Earl was fain to give back his grant; since when there was loyal peace in the land. Godolphin owned that there was much force in their remonstrance; and promised that it should be carefully considered. They naturally invoked likewise the interposition of Pembroke, who, like other Ministers, had not been consulted in the matter; but, lest his and Godolphin's aid should fail, their chief spokesman, Mr. Price, appealed to the House of Commons, and with such effect that an Address was unanimously voted that the grant might be recalled. William replied, "I have a kindness for my Lord Portland, which he hath deserved of me, by long and faithful services; but I should not have given him these lands if I had imagined the House of Commons could have been concerned. I will therefore recall the grant, and find some other way of showing my favour to him."

The pressure of taxation still continued. While the country gentleman was forced to curtail the comforts of his unostentatious home, and the farmer and the trader were often pinched for the necessaries of life, more money than ever was spent at elections, for placemen every day lived more showily than they used to do. It would never have done to allow discontent to roam at large for objects whereon to batten; so the Court favourites, English as well as Dutch, were pointed out as the especial burthen of the nation. If it were not for exorbitant and wasteful grants, another shilling might be taken off the land tax; and many a long night was spent in angry debate on the subject. William's partiality for his favourites was undeniable, and the suspected abuse of his discretionary power over Crown lands gradually became known. But did all his Ministers really regret the diminution of his influence by these alienations and escheats?

Throughout the protracted struggle of the Barons to prevent the Plantagenet Kings alienating the patrimony of the Crown, and to compel them to resume improvident leases and feoffs, efforts were repeatedly made by Statute to throw on the neck of Prerogative a bridle which might curb its wayward ways. Acts of Resumption were frequently accompanied by declarations, and more than once by resolutions, that in future no grant should be made without the advice and assent of such of the Privy Council as enjoyed general confidence. On the accession of Henry IV. a joint Address from the three estates of the realm complained of outrageous gifts of land and of great sums of money in fines and dues released to undeserving persons by his predecessor, which they desired him to realise. In order to avoid any errors through haste or misrepresentation in the time to come, they laid it down that, without the sanction of the wise men of his Council,[1] he ought to promise nothing, and unless conveyed formally by letters patent, Royal gifts should be held void and of no effect. Henry engaged to act accordingly. His ill-fated grandson fell by departing from the rule and squandering resources upon courtiers and sycophants. The learned Fortescue deplored the evils which he saw impending.[2] Parliament must take some security that thenceforth the like dilapidations of the Crown estate should not occur through any weakness of prodigality, because "all such giving away of the Kynge's lyvelihoode is harmful to all his liege men which shall therebye be artyd to a new charge for the sustentation of his estate. A good and notable council should be established, by the advyse of which all new gifts and rewards might be moderated," and the old grants should be resumed. When such a council should have been fully created and established, all supplications for gifts or rewards should be sent to the same, and there debated and deliberated. "Thus would the King be relieved from importunity and the land saved from harm."[3] This early vision of a Cabinet,

[1] 1 Henry IV., Rot. Parl. No. 98.

[2] *De Dominio Regali et Politico*, &c., MS. by Sir J. Fortescue, Chief Justice.

[3] *Ibid.*

originating in Parliament and responsible thereto, the patriotic Judge saw afar off and was glad. "O! what myghty quiet," he exclaims, "shall grow to the Kynge by this order, and in what rest shall all his people lyve, havyng no colour of grievance with such as shall be about hys person for the giving away of his lands, nor of murmurings against him for the misgoverning of his realm." But for this he lived two centuries too soon.

There were fresh Acts of resumption under Edward IV. and Henry VII., with promises against Royal waste, which the latter faithfully kept, and thereby piled up the vast heap of riches which he left to his son to squander at his capricious will. By this time the mutinous strength of the aristocracy was spent, and their day of Parliamentary power had not come. Lavish concessions of land in Ireland by Elizabeth and Cromwell were deemed illegitimate penalties of discomfiture in civil war; and to clear up the confusion of forfeitures Parliament at the Restoration set up the Court of Claims, who sat at Dublin to adjudicate between man and man according to such methods of procedure as might be ordered for the purpose. Clarendon warned the Viceroy of the danger and discredit that would ensue from partial or factious decisions. If only native testimony were listened to, no doubt few of the victors would be enriched, and on the other hand, "if every English evidence should carry it, all the Irish would be extirpated. It must rest upon the wisdom and integrity of the Judge, to weigh and distinguish between the evidence; and if he should reject all Irish evidence because it was Irish, when no other could naturally be expected, it were as good as declared that all the Irish should be destroyed. The Commissioners must judge by the rules prescribed to them, and more unequal rules he never heard of than those that the House of Commons would have prescribed. Was it not true that treason had been the general sin of the three nations, though the dismal effects and judgment of it fell only upon poor Ireland? Yet since they were to be preserved a nation, such a temper should be exercised towards them in

the administration of justice that they should undergo no disadvantage or reproach, only for being Irish."[1] There was no Cabinet to enforce these equitable views.

When the House of Commons in 1698 found themselves beset by the disbanded troops clamorous for arrears of pay, they proceeded to appoint seven Commissioners with suitable salaries to inquire into more recent confiscations and re-grants which had followed the flight of James and the Treaty of Limerick. A Cabinet worthy of the name would have resisted such encroachment on regal authority as unconstitutional; but the few heads of departments present thought it expedient to acquiesce, and only insisted that the inquisition should extend to the two previous reigns.

When Vernon told the King what had been done he did not like it at all. He had his own reasons for being uneasy; for few save Bentinck and Sidney knew how many estates of the vanquished he had actually given away. But he tried to persuade the Minister that, after all, the inquiry might be of no effect.[2] Acts of Resumption at the bidding of Parliament were grown obsolete; and not even the grants to Lady Castlemaine and the Duchess of Portsmouth had been annulled. But Parliament had long expected that the forfeited lands in Ireland should be sold to defray the charges of the Civil War. Ambiguous assurances had been given that their wishes should be attended to. What if it should appear that they had been wholly neglected? Here, then, was a clear and definite issue to be tried between the taxing authority of the State and the personal will of the Sovereign, and the legislative jury of seven, with Lord Drogheda for their foreman, proceeded to Dublin to try the question.

The Local Legislature being in recess, they were assigned the Chamber usually occupied by the Irish Peers for their hall of audience, and thither evicted owners who had but passively

[1] The Chancellor to Anglesea, 18 April, 1663. State Papers, Sup. III., 36.

[2] Vernon to Shrewsbury.

abetted the cause of James, and immigrant grantees who had risked little, if anything, for the cause of William, mortgagees who trembled for their money long since lent, and holders of valuable leases sadly at fault as to whose tenants they should be, with a crowd of schemers of all dimensions, came to tell their incompatible tales of suffering and wrong. A minority of the inquisitors gradually showed a disposition to let wounds heal and encourage antagonistic creeds and races to compromise and forget, but the majority of four were all for probing to the quick and laying bare every suspected sin and back-sliding, equally of poor and great. Every forfeit acre, it was said, that had been sold below the market price should be brought to the hammer again, and restitution should be made to an injured Treasury of those that had been left in the old hands by the clandestine use of favour. Coningsby, Sidney, and Rouvigny began to repent having used their opportunities as Lords Justices to enfeoff themselves under the Great Seal of Ireland by leave of *his Majesty*; and still greater beneficiaries of his Grace listened from afar to the threatening of wholesale reversal, which the Commissioners were supposed to meditate. At length their memorable Report appeared, bearing the signatures of but four of their number. They found that, while in England since the Revolution but 57 persons had been outlawed, in Ireland there had been 3,921, and that the confiscated property, as accruing to the Crown, exceeded in value two millions sterling. This comprehended one million and sixty thousand Irish, or one million seven hundred thousand English acres, yielding a rental of upwards of two hundred thousand a year. About a fourth had been restored by the judgment of Chancery in conformity with the Articles of Limerick; and a seventh was given back by the favour of the Crown to the original possessors. The remaining two-thirds formed the subject of varied and curious exposure. In the course of seven years, concessions small and great, the most conspicuous in the realm and the most obscure, had been made without the knowledge of the chief

Ministers of State, which would have sufficed to liquidate the debt due to the Army and Navy; while the hereditary estates of the Crown in Ireland had been likewise alienated to a great extent. The struggle in Ireland, from Derry to Kinsale, was computed to have cost £4,515,693, of which two-thirds had been borne by Irish taxation: why should not the residue be defrayed by the sale of the confiscated lands? The Commissioners recommended especially the resumption of seventy-six grants: To Sidney, Lord Romney, 49,517 acres; to Keppel, Lord Albemarle, 108,633 acres; to Woodstock, heir of Portland, 135,820 acres; to Ginckel, Lord Athlone, 26,480 acres; to Rouvigny, Lord Galway, 36,148 acres; to Thomas, Lord Coningsby, 5,966 acres, with valuable chief rents in and near Dublin; to Auverquerque, Lord Rochford, 39,871 acres; to Elizabeth Villiers, Lady Orkney, 95,619 acres, said to be worth £25,000 a year; and to her sister, Marquise de Puyzart, 30,512 acres.[1]

No Minister chose to draw down upon himself individually the clamour which these disclosures provoked, but a Bill, summarily cancelling these and other grants, and applying the proceeds of sales to be publicly made, with a view to the discharge of the Army and Navy arrears, in the liquidation of the Floating Debt, was called for on all sides. Colonel Granville, as Chairman of Ways and Means, reported a serious deficit in the Excise, to meet which new supplies from taxes and other sources would be indispensable. An Address to the Throne was presented on the 15th February, desiring the revocation of the condemned grants, to which William replied that he was not led by mere inclination, but "thought himself obliged in justice to reward those who had served him well in Ireland out of the estates forfeited to him. The long war in which they had been engaged had left the nation much in debt, and the taking just and effectual ways of

[1] The original of this, as of so many other legislative records, was probably destroyed in the fire of the 16th of October, 1834, but from one of the copies circulated by order of the House and preserved unimpaired the whole of the facts above stated have been taken.

supporting the public credit was what, in his opinion, would best contribute to the honour, interest, and safety of the Kingdom."[1] Would any Cabinet have advised such an answer? Neither Shrewsbury, Devonshire, Somers or Orford, Vernon or Montagu, Pembroke or Marlborough, or any other man of weight in either House had been consulted, and the Speaker, foreseeing the reception it was certain to meet with, took upon himself to hold it back for several days. When at last, in despair of any modification, it became his duty to recite its futile and provoking terms from the Chair, the unanimity of indignation knew no bounds, and without division or debate it was resolved that whoever had suggested it used their utmost endeavours to create a misunderstanding between the King and his people. Their names were too palpable between the lines. Spendthrift Romney was distinctly charged in the Report for sanctioning, as Lord Justice and Viceroy, the extortion of blackmail by the officers of the Army and the Castle, for respite and despoliation; and was charged with having netted as his own share many thousand pounds. While Queen Mary lived, her hated rival had to wait for her dower in marriage with Lord Orkney; but her continued influence was confessed in the independent portion in broad acres bestowed on her nephew Woodstock, and the salaries and perquisites conferred on her brother Jersey. These, like Auverquerque and Albemarle, had everything to gain by prompting their benefactor to defy the Commons, and his loss of reputation as a ruler was above their ken.

The necessity for passing the Land Tax to square the Budget for the year was urgent, and by the advice of Harley, clauses imposing the tax were tacked to a Bill resuming the misappropriated estates. On the old question of privilege, the Peers objected to deal with the subject in this way. But the case was exceptional, and the logic of observing ordinary rules of procedure was disregarded. The Upper House by two to one submitted, and the King did not venture to veto the Act for

[1] 21st Feb., 1700.

his humiliation. Its depth was sounded in a private letter to Galway intimating his supersession with that of Bolton and Jersey, as Lords Justices, for it was felt that a change of Executive hands was indispensable at the Castle, whatever the practical effect might be.

William confessed without reserve the anxiety he had undergone, and his vexation at Rouvigny being deprived of what he had given him; but he should earnestly seek occasions to acknowledge his services in some other way. "There had been so many intrigues in the last session that without having been on the spot and well informed of everything, it could not be conceived. The Commission of Lords Justices could not well be continued as it stood, and he had resolved to send the Duke of Shrewsbury as Viceroy. But he wished that Galway should command the Army under him, and hoped that he would not take this as a degradation or quit his service; for he had never had more occasion for persons of his capacity and fidelity."

Shrewsbury, in one of his hypochondriacal moods, said he was too ill to go, and after some delay Rochester, to please the multiplying friends of Princess Anne, was named instead. Lord Drogheda vouched the truth in all essentials of the facts recorded in the Report of the Commissioners. Hillside and valley had been stripped of their sheltering woods, and wide tracts of fertile lands laid bare; farmers and cottiers were compelled to sacrifice at nominal prices whatever they possessed of horses, sheep, or cattle; while old timber trees, indiscriminately felled in the blind greed of absentee gain, lay in reproachful piles, unsaleable at sixpence a-piece, for house or shop building; for industry and enterprise were paralysed by misrule[1]—foreign trade was forbidden by law, and prædial industry by the prevailing sense of legal insecurity. Jacobite attainders, impeaching the titles of

[1] The wounds thus sordidly inflicted on the face of the country were long in disappearing. In our own day, M. de Tocqueville, when travelling through some of the richest counties, asked why no forests or plantations were to be seen, and being told how much was the effect of civil war, he said: "Ireland is like a beautiful woman bereft of her hair."

Williamite nobles and gentry, were revenged by the forfeiture of Jacobite estates, and the banishment of their former owners: and these, when not clandestinely bought back, were given over to be rackrented by foreign favourites from whom they had now been recaptured, to be put up for sale to the highest bidder. It was Rochester's duty to see that this was done, and when after a brief sojourn he resumed the more genial occupation of leading the High Church Party in the House of Peers, he nominated Drogheda one of the Lords Justices to complete the work of repartition. But Chancery and Exchequer were deafened with conflicting plaints and demurring pleas on bonds and mortgages given by transitory owners; and pleas in debt and contract, which in ten years had ceased to have enforcible obligation, till all financial credit and thought of improving investment was stricken unto death.

Many old proprietors who had hitherto escaped ruin, in the vague fear that their turn might come, secretly assigned over their properties to powerful neighbours, and took leases at low rents from them, trusting to their renouncing and restoring what was given them in trust if better times should come; and to their honour and that of their descendants, numerous instances might be named where goodly heritages at last reverted to the sons of their ancient owners. But Rochester, whatever his disposition may have been, was utterly powerless to help or heal the misery and confusion of the time, and there was no Cabinet to whose collective judgment he could appeal.

The fear of a disputed succession drove men of opposing parties at Westminster, on the death of the Duke of Gloucester,[1] to agree that the reversion of the Crown should be settled by statute on the Electress of Hanover and her descendants, should Anne die childless. The opportunity was too tempting to be neglected for determining conditions on which legal power should be exercised. William's repeated attempts to confer great demesnes upon his personal favourites had convinced

[1] 30th July, 1700.

thoughtful statesmen that limits should be finally set to the exercise of personal power without the knowledge and sanction of responsible Ministers, and that these conditions should be embodied, as theretofore they had never been, in a fundamental statute of the realm. If a prince of the prudence and sagacity of the Stadtholder could not resist the impulse, that seemed ineradicable in his branch of the House of Stuart, to resuscitate bygone prerogatives, why should any other be trusted to rise superior to the temptation? Better once for all to declare that the Executive Authority should only be exercised with the advice, consent, and participation of public men whom the nation from time to time thought fit to honour, and whom Parliament could always call to strict account without stirring up fears of revolution. The holiday maxim that the King could do no wrong had proved worth little on working days, unless somebody else could practically be made answerable.

The Long Parliament, with all its fervour against despotism, and pitiless zeal for its suppression, had slipped its foot in the blood of Charles I.; and found too late that it had only slain one who wanted to be master, for one who was able and determined to be so. With the Restoration, the returning flood of loyalty had beguiled the Sovereign into relying on the older precedents of absolutism in Church and State; Cabinet responsibility being still unknown. As far as the imposition of taxes and the exercise of the Legislative Veto were concerned, the quarrel between Crown and Parliament had since been closed, and the bitter lessons taught by the enforced dismissal of the Dutch Guards, and the revocation of furtive grants, might have seemed sufficiently severe. But so long as each Minister could be individually appointed and removed without the knowledge or assent of other Heads of Departments, and it might be against their will, the King held in his hands the reins of personal rule; and accountability in matters of the highest importance or any guarantee for a fixed line of policy was unattainable.

The Electress of Hanover was the English-born daughter of

Charles I.; but her son and grandson, to whom in succession the Throne was to be given, were alien by birth and education. It was, therefore, provided that no foreigner, though naturalised, should take grants of land from the Crown, or hold any office of trust, or seat in Parliament; that the nation should not be obliged to engage in any war for the defence of territories abroad without the consent of the Legislature; that the wearer of the Crown should belong to the Established Church, and that the Judges, theretofore holding office at the will of the Sovereign, should in future hold *dum bene gesserint*, removable only on Address of either House. Above all, a clause was adopted in Committee, which for the first time dealt directly with Ministerial responsibility. Harley said that the haste with which the Government was settled at the Revolution had prevented the nation requiring such securities from the future Sovereign as would have prevented much mischief. He hoped they would not again fall into that error. It was consequently enacted that "all things relating to the well governing of this Kingdom properly cognizable in the Privy Council, by the laws and customs of this realm, should be transacted there; and all resolutions taken therefrom shall be signed by such of the Privy Council as shall advise and consent to the same."[1] This was indispensable to prevent future attempts to elude Ministerial participation in administrative or diplomatic acts of State, and Ministerial responsibility for them; like those which had led to the controversy between King and Parliament concerning the Treaty of Ryswick. The Bill became law in June, 1701, and thence may be traced the uprise of the power to direct and control the policy of the State; but it must be observed how cautiously and tentatively the great change here foreshadowed was outlined on the disc of the future. No number of Privy Councillors was named as requisite to give validity to administrative measures; no heads of Departments were designated as indispensable signatories; not a word was said touching the power of appointment and dismissal; and for the interval

[1] 12th and 13th Wm. III., chap. 2.

during which it seemed probable that Anne might wear the diadem, it was not made too clear that the provisions of the Act should apply.

On the death of James II. in September, 1701, growing confidence in peace founded on recent treaties of alliance was suddenly dashed by Louis XIV., who, against the advice of his Ministers, publicly acknowledged James III. as rightful King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. William was at Loo when the tidings reached him, and Lord Manchester was at once desired to quit Paris without taking leave. On all hands it was regarded in England not merely as a wanton breach of faith, but as an insulting attempt by France to nominate the Sovereign of a neighbouring people in defiance of their deliberate will declared in Parliament. Hastening from abroad, William summoned to Kensington those whom he trusted most, and individually asked their counsel. Sunderland advised his making amends to Somers for his recent deprival of the Great Seal, at the envious bidding of his foes, by placing him at the head of affairs, and allowing him to name his principal colleagues. Obviously, it meant the restoration to office of such leading Whigs as would disarm opposition to a war budget, without displacing Rochester or Godolphin, or discarding the support of Nottingham and Harley. The combination of abilities in the public service without identity of aim, unison of expression, or the pretence of mutual trust and regard was the Stadtholder's dream at the beginning; and often as he had been rudely wakened from it by the uproar of contending parties, it was his dream to the end. Somers came, and had the offer, but declined to entertain it because made without the privity or approval of the Ministers actually in office; for if these were thus treated, how could their supplanters tell how soon they might in turn be thrown over? In the excitement of the exigency William exclaimed with vehemence, "Never! never!" But it was too late. Somers was a poor man for the great space he had occupied in the public eye; but after ten years' unwearied devotion in which he had

served, if not always wisely, only too well, he felt that he had been abandoned from mere supposed expediency, and he finally refused. Some changes were made, the precise value or motive of which history has no lens that will enable us to scan. Parliament was dissolved, and in the popular resentment at the conduct of the French King, a House of Commons was returned which courtiers said was more placable than the last. But Cabinet there was none, or Executive Government, save that of the Monarch, out of health, out of spirits, and out of reliance on the resolves of the nation to do what he might urge betimes in the hour of need. An unlooked-for accident which laid him on the bed of death put an end to the perilous suspense; but it is eminently characteristic of the forethoughtful purpose and policy of the man, that his last act, as he felt his end draw near, was a message to both Houses of Parliament recommending without delay a complete union of the three Kingdoms.

The peaceful accession of Anne opened a new scene. Her father's death had relieved the consciences of many bred in allegiance to him; and they would have kept their early vow had they not been driven, for sake of creed and country, to accept the Resolution, and who now gladly proffered her their fealty without misgiving or reservation. In the Privy Council who proclaimed her Queen, and in the throng which came to do her homage, the Whigs may have been a minority; but without the leading part played by them, Government by prerogative would not have been deposed, and Government by "Ministers who were not a Ministry" could not have been maintained. They had held great offices in the late reign, and not a few of them had proved faithful friends to Anne in the day of adversity. Who now should guide her hand and govern in her name? Was the uncle of the Queen to be allowed, as he expected, to fabricate a new Executive wholly or chiefly of materials of his choice; breaking with the recent past, and launching the country again upon a course devious and doubtful as that in which he would have counselled James; or should the

new reign open with a general amnesty, and an attempt to combine the best men of all Parties in resistance to reaction, with the practical acknowledgment that Parliament should not only make the laws, but decide who should administer them?

Godolphin and Marlborough, whose intimacy had recently been cemented by the intermarriage of their children, were eminently fitted to measure the wants and perils of the hour; and, through the undoubting confidence of the Queen in the wife of the latter, certain of her acquiescence in what they might recommend. In the main, by their advice, the existing officers of State were unchanged. Sarah became Groom of the Stole, Mistress of the Robes, and Keeper of the Privy Purse, while her husband was named Captain-General of the Forces and Knight of the Garter. The pride of a woman of less self-reliance and ambition would have been appeased with these rewards, but Sarah had long looked forward to the day when she should sway the councils of the realm, and, in concert with the great financier and the great soldier, she became for the next seven years the animating and ascendant spirit of administration. The ebb and flow of power between St. Stephen's and St. James's had not left the official shore of Whitehall always above high-water mark, but Ministerial footing there had become firmer than before.

Godolphin would have declined the envied title of Lord Treasurer, but Marlborough vowed that unless the one man whom he implicitly trusted was director of the national resources, he would positively refuse the command in the coming war. Whereupon Godolphin yielded, and undertook, with plenary powers, the task of providing for domestic credit and military expenditure on a scale which he foresaw would be vast. He stipulated, however, as a condition, that Henry Boyle should be Chancellor of the Exchequer, Pembroke President of the Council, and Devonshire Lord Steward—pledges to the Whigs that, whoever else might dream of party exclusion, he was not of that mind. In like manner, the Command-in-Chief of the troops within the realm was left in the hands of Schomberg, created

Duke of Leinster on the death of his father at the Boyne. Nottingham was desired to resume the Seals of Secretary of State.

A few days after the Queen's accession, Southwell wrote from London: "We are now in a new world, and after so great a thunderclap surely never was there so quick a calm, for within eight hours of the King's death Queen Anne was fixed on the Throne. Lord Marlborough is gone this morning for Holland to confirm our steadiness to the alliance, and to establish theirs that so the enemy may not sow tares. I have great wishes that good may come by attempting an union with Scotland, and the more in hopes it will necessarily draw in a consideration of Ireland."[1]

Rochester retained his Lieutenancy of Ireland, without thinking it necessary to return thither, and no one audibly questioned the nomination of Prince George of Denmark as Lord High Admiral; but a ministerial Committee of Inquiry into Offices lost no time in making known their views to the department as to the manner in which its business should be conducted. "I send your Lordships," wrote the Secretary of State, "the enclosed, which came from Colonel Selwyn, by order of the Committee, that you may consider and report to them your opinion." In the confidential copies of the Earl's correspondence a note was added in the same handwriting,—"the enclosed was entitled the state of the Admiral's new powers and the inconvenience."[2]

Instructions were addressed thenceforth from the Home Office to the Prince's council at the Admiralty regarding ships, officers, stores, arms, and implements while His Royal Highness was absent; and the practice being thus established of treating the Board as the responsible Executive of the department, it was continued in point of form after her Majesty's Consort had returned to Windsor.[3] Rochester, chagrined at the preference

[1] From the Irish Office, Spring Gardens, 14th March, 1702, to Archbp. King.—*MS.*
[2] Nottingham Papers, *MS.*, 5th May, 1702.
[3] *Idem.*, 31st October, 1702.—*MS.*

shown for Nottingham's advice, and fearing the loss of his position as head of the party of the Church in Parliament, gravely remonstrated with his Royal niece on her neglect of him, and asked to be allowed to exchange the Viceroyalty for a Secretaryship of State or the Presidency of the Council. No disposition was, however, shown to gratify his wishes, or to strengthen the influence of the section of politicians to which he belonged. He was told that a due administration of affairs in Ireland might best engage his attention; and on his refusal to betake himself thither he encountered a rebuke which left him no choice but to resign. Ormond's share in the victory of Vigo was rewarded by the Lord Lieutenancy; and as a great Irish noble his appointment was undoubtedly popular.

Lady Marlborough owned that from this time she "began to be looked upon" as a person of consequence, without whose approbation at least neither places, pensions, nor honours were bestowed; at first, indeed, not seeming to assume the air of distinction and dictation for which she was subsequently known. Even in the first days of the new reign she hesitated not to combat the prejudices of her Royal mistress. Her husband's command of the army abroad, and Godolphin's continuance as head of the Treasury, her own supremacy at Court, and the great places retained by Nottingham, Ormond, Normanby, Jersey, and Chancellor Wright, more than balanced the influence of Somerset, Devonshire, Pembroke, and Boyle, who held important posts and who were regarded as representing, though inadequately, the Whig interest. In outward semblance all went on as before. Every Minister knelt to Anne as his predecessor had done to her grandfather, and to her would-be despotic sire; and if all had not the careful and scrupulous wisdom of the Lord Treasurer, or the grace of sympathy and devotion of the Captain-General, there was not one of them who would not have repudiated the idea that he held office by any other tenure than that of her Majesty's pleasure. Nevertheless, there came about by degrees a transmutation of things in the working of the Executive, which,

had it been anticipated in the days of Pym and Strafford, would have averted civil war and much that followed in its train. It is curious to observe with what good temper and good nature, with what dignity and prudence, Anne allowed herself to be led during the greater portion of her reign, and that, so long as the delicacy of deference and duty was shown her, she hardly seems to have thought of asking the dangerous question, which shall govern England—the Crown that cannot be called to account save by revolution, or individual Ministers that Parliament may depose by a majority of one? A letter to Godolphin, from Windsor, during the negotiations for the Scottish Union, reveals, on the other hand, how reduced had become the weight of the hereditary sceptre.

"Though you tell me you intend to be here either to-morrow night or Saturday morning, I cannot help venting my thoughts upon the Scotch affairs. I think these people use me very hardly, and I should be very glad to know your opinion, whether upon this refusal I might not write to the Commissioner to let him know, if he does not think it for the service that Lord Forfar should have the post I recommended him to, I would let him have some other that might be equivalent to it; and that I do expect he should comply with this one desire of mine, in return for all the compliances I have made to him. This may displease his grace's touchy temper, but I can't see it can do any prejudice to my service; and in my poor opinion such usage should be resented. As to the Duke of Queensberry, though he is none of my choice, I own it goes mightily against me—it grates my soul —to take a man into my service that has not only betrayed me, but tricked me several times,—one that has been obnoxious to his own countrymen these many years, and one that I can never be convinced can be of any use. But after all, since my friends may be censured, and it may be said if I had not been obstinate everything would have gone well, I will do myself the violence these unreasonable Scotsmen desire; and indeed it is an inexpressible one. My heart was so full that it was impossible

for me to forbear easing it a little, and therefore I hope you will excuse this trouble."

When the Queen visited Bath the Treasurer and other Ministers accompanied the Court, and when letters from Edinburgh or Dublin required authoritative replies the officials in attendance assembled in her presence and transmitted their decisions to the capital.

Had the choice of Ministers on Anne's accession been really made by her it is scarcely credible that Jersey would have been retained. But he seems to have contrived to gain the confidence of Nottingham; and their private correspondence shows the footing on which they stood.

For reasons of policy which the Lord Chamberlain probably did not understand, Marlborough had suggested a visit to England by Prince Eugene. Both the Treasurer and the Secretary acquiesced. Jersey wrote regretting their decision. "Had I been in a place where I might have used such freedom of speech, I should certainly have opposed it, for I cannot look upon the Prince's journey hither otherwise than as a contrivance of Count Wratislaw with his friends the Whigs to extort subsidies which I fear this nation cannot bear; and to brand those honest gentlemen that do not come freely into them with the usual reproach of their being disaffected to their country; for I take it for granted that in case this Prince is here his opinion will be too popular to be withstood, though the demands he makes be never so extravagant. Would it not be better that he should see my Lord Marlborough in Holland, since they can there more properly concert the disposition of the next campaign, rather than he should come hither to foment our divisions? If these sentiments are not right you know I am always willing to submit them to your better judgment. Meantime I have mentioned them to nobody here, and desire you will burn this letter."[1]

Thus, confessedly the Chamberlain, though present, was not invariably deemed, and did not deem himself, one of those who

[1] Lord Chamberlain to Secretary of State.—*MS.*

was officially expected to advise ; although his predecessor, Sunderland, undoubtedly was so. Nottingham was pledged to support the wishes of Marlborough, and he easily dissuaded Jersey from pressing his objections. When Nottingham resigned soon afterwards, Jersey was glad to retire on a pension, and the Gold Key was given to the Earl of Kent, who, with equal docility in speech and vote, had the superior merit of having great possessions.

Anticipating the triumphs of her husband, and reckoning on the practical expansion of her own power, Sarah revolved within herself how various departments might be reinforced with ability, and the existing ascendancy of the Junto thereby rendered more impregnable. Round her tea-table she talked freely with men like Harley and Cowper, and later on with St. John and Walpole, disdaining to disguise predilections as one of a feebler nature might instinctively have done. Nottingham would not bend to her caprice, and did not share her party agnosticism, and she was determined to replace him with whoever would bring most strength to Government on whom she could personally rely. No Whig seemed so eligible as Harley ; and she was, perhaps, not yet prepared to try the temper of the Queen by asking that too many of that party should be preferred to their traditional rivals. When first in Parliament Harley had but a moderate income, which he spent without ostentation, chiefly on emissaries to gain him early and exclusive information, and upon clerks to furnish him with unpublished documents useful for reference in debate. During William's reign he was usually in Opposition, but the character he acquired for knowledge and aptitude in business led to his being chosen Speaker by consent of both sides, and he was now offered ministerial office by Godolphin, and on Nottingham's resignation became Secretary of State. When the Privy Seal was taken from Normanby, recently made Duke of Buckingham, in consequence of his ultra-leanings to the more vehement party in the Church, Sarah advised its being conferred on the Whig Duke, Holles Newcastle. The greatest and most

difficult step remained. Wright, though a competent lawyer, was deficient as a courtier and wholly wanting as a politician. While the majority of his old friends remained in office his assent and support in the House of Lords might be implicitly relied on: in council it was hardly deemed worth asking. But if critical times should come and the predominance of power should tremble in the balance of Party, the Keeper of the Great Seal ought to be not only reliable but worthy in talents and attainments to fill his high position. Such a man in every respect was Henry Cowper, who had ingratiated himself with the fastidious and fearless Duchess. Halifax commended Cowper as successor to Wright, and when no one else would undertake the task Sarah continually laboured with the Queen to make him Keeper, to save the Duke and the Treasurer from an application so disagreeable to her. Godolphin saw the policy of attaching such a man to the Government.

The sense of administrative power felt by Marlborough and Godolphin chafed at the restrictions imposed by the Act of Succession requiring every Executive measure of consequence to be adopted only in a meeting of the Privy Council, and to be endorsed by five at least of its members. Their author, Harley, now in office, no longer contended for their retention on the Statute-book. As Secretary of State, he had cognizance of everything of importance that was designed or done, and he easily persuaded himself that checks upon the will of Royalty, needful with a King like William, might be discarded as obsolete with a Queen like Anne. As Leader of the Commons, he brought in and carried[1] the repeal of so much of them as related to Ministerial counsel and countersign, and thereby contributed, it was said, to a rehabilitation of the Executive system which William was blamed for having pursued according to precedent, in this affair of the Partition Treaty. Neither he nor his successor had any responsible Cabinet to consult; and this perfunctory en-

[1] 4th and 5th of Anne, chap. viii., sec. 24 (numbered chap. xx. in the "Ed. of Statutes of the Realm" published 1821).

dorsement by five Privy Councillors, named for the occasion out of five times that number, could add no constitutional validity to an otherwise unpatriotic act of the Crown. But Marlborough was fast becoming, if he had not already become, as his only military rival afterwards called him, "himself the Government";[1] and if he shared his transcendent sway with any it was with his wife, and with Godolphin. The great notables, Heads of Departments, Lords of the Household, and Law Officers, being graciously summoned to Kensington, were told what was about to be done; and any suggestions they had to offer were duly noted, sometimes perhaps considered. Hallam, indeed, admits his inability to trace clearly the changes in procedure which tended to increase the discretion and authority of the Secretary of State.

The general plans of Government he thinks were discussed and determined in confidential meetings, undefined in number and undesignated by law, but consisting of members of the Privy Council; on which, gratuitously, he bestows the unearned epithet of *Cabinet*. But the negative evidence is conclusive that the institution was unknown of a distinct and combined administrative body consulting in confidence apart, and advising as one; and whose responsibility for the acts of Government was to be mutually deemed and publicly recognised as collective and not merely individual.

Ormond had opened the Session of 1703 at Dublin with the usual assurances of Royal goodwill, but dropped not a word leading men to hope that the enactments of the previous reign, which were fast reducing the woollen trade to extinction, were to be relaxed. Like the Scotch, the representatives of Ireland would willingly have come into the notion of an incorporate union on condition of free trade with all parts of the realm and the Colonies. They occupied themselves in discussing this proposal; and by the Chancellor, Sir Richard Cox, it was earnestly pressed on Nottingham. It was laid before the Queen in Council, and

[1] Duke of Wellington to Lord Mahon.—*Corresp.*

the Secretary was told to write that the wishes of Ireland for fusion would be taken into consideration. But the day never came. The danger of leaving Scotland liable to legislative and dynastic alienation seemed more pressing; and the best wits in the two kingdoms were exercised in compassing a permanent accommodation. The larger realm was left to fret, and chafe, and pine. Its gentry, made to feel themselves of no account at Court, betook themselves to prodigality and pleasure; the Church, as a mere pension list for needy or damaged adherents of great families in England, sunk into sinecurism, worldliness, and demoralisation; and the cultivators of the soil, hopeless of regaining what they had lost, betook themselves to humbler modes of industry, and by the winter hearth transmitted to their children the fading memories of other times. The project of a Scottish Union had indeed been broached in William's time; and Nottingham had given notice in the Lords of an address praying for a dissolution of the Edinburgh Parliament to prepare the way for discussion of the requisite details at Holyrood. But the agitation caused by the first rumours of the change forbade a premature appeal to national feeling at elections. Many of the great chieftains were pledged to resist the diminution of their provincial importance; and Fletcher of Saltoun devoted his fearless and eloquent pen to denunciations of the measure.

The Parliament at Edinburgh was a continual scene of personal and family feuds, in which religious and dynastic controversies largely mingled; and Queensberry, with his thorough knowledge of the jealousies and enmities that mainly moved the idle and passionate leaders of local faction, was an instrument rarely fitted to deal with them. A few patriotic men in the undisciplined assembly, who feared that some day James III. would land with a French force and rally to his standard the heads of the Clans, shrunk from the prospect of a vain attempt to separate two kingdoms, or the vainer scheme of imposing on England the Stuart dynasty. They believed that the poverty, stagnation, and discontent of the Lowlands arose from the exclusion of their trade

from the growing dependencies of England, and they despaired of constitutional or stable government so long as the industry of the towns bore an inappreciable proportion to semi-barbarous and profitless occupation of the soil. With them the sole practical question worth debating seriously was, whether Scotland could obtain thorough participation in all branches of commerce and trade as the price of legislative independence. Godolphin was fortunately well-disposed to concede a condition so reasonable; and, though angry protests were made by not a few English towns against the rumoured admission of rivals to a share in their gains from colonial and foreign trade, he had firmness and wisdom enough to insist on the stipulation being embodied in the final treaty.

When the design came to be publicly discussed "some wished an entire union, some a federal one, and these latter seemed to make the greater party";[1] but the veteran official preferred the scheme of incorporation, as likely to bring about what he termed the "mainest and greatest benefits." Had William lived a little longer his experience of the working of Federalism in Holland might have modified certain centripetal tendencies in those about him; but day-after-to-morrow policy was beyond the comprehension of Anne, and the adaptation of local liberty to imperial safety had to find its way.

To the lasting credit of the statesmen who led the counsels of the time, no thought of overbearing or outwitting the Scottish Parliament seems to have been harboured by them; and their patience with petulent obstruction and exacting delay is worthy of being kept in mind by all who have to deal with international affairs. The idea of a legislative union had occupied the attention of many reflecting and far-seeing men of both nations, even before the blundering attempt of Cromwell which came to nothing. In the corrupt and intolerant days of the Restoration no hearing was to be had for enlightened plans of progress, or for the remodelling of existing institutions. But after the ex-

[1] Marchmont to the Queen, 29th Dec., 1705.

citement of the Revolution subsided, and the perils of a disputed succession began to reappear, lovers of peace and order, north and south of the Tweed, reverted to the hope of means being found for securing the future identity of the Crowns, whoever might wear them; and the fusion of Legislatures, by whatever suffrages they were chosen. Until the former was accomplished it would obviously have been waste of time to discuss the feasibility of the latter. But when, in 1705, identic statutes were passed ratifying the succession as settled in the House of Brunswick and excluding the heirs by hereditary claim of the House of Stuart, the occasion looked as if it had come for bringing about an incorporate union of the unequal realms. Naturally the weaker misgave the proposal of the stronger that it should give up its individuality; and justly it pondered long and carefully the possible as well as the apparent results of a partnership which practically would be indissoluble. The Scottish nobles sat in the same House with the Commons. A few great families had more or less intimate relations with the Court, and hardly feared a diminution of their importance from being admitted to the English House of Peers; while the better educated members of the gentry, weary of the excesses of provincial authority and the anomalies of hereditary tribunals, envied the control exercised in freedom of speech at Westminster over the conduct of the Executive and the Judiciary.

From the fewness and smallness of the Scotch towns commercial or middle-class opinion was too feeble to modify materially the passionate impulses of the rest of the community. Manufacture and enterprise were crippled, as in Ireland, by the jealous spirit of English enactments. Godolphin and Harley risked no little popularity by offering Scotland free trade; but they knew that without it their project of union would never be accepted. Neither was over scrupulous in dealing with noisy opponents who had private aims and purposes to satisfy. But neither they nor their colleagues attempted to carry the measure by merely winning over the majority of insincere patriots by promises of

place or title. An equal number of Commissioners were appointed for the two kingdoms, who should elaborate the details of union so as to make it acceptable to the two nations; and the Queen's Ministers in Scotland were instructed to nominate for that country most of the leading men in Parliament who had theretofore taken exception to the proposal. If they could not be won over in the course of negotiation it would be hazardous to attempt its enforcement. The pact must be made by treaty, not imposed by overbearing force, if it was to strike root or be permanently fruitful: for a nation may easier be brought to forget the wounds of conquest than to forgive the humiliation of being cheated of its freedom. After prolonged and excited discussion, the Act was carried in the Assembly at Holyrood by 110 to 69[1] votes, and after brief debates at Westminster the treaty in due form of statute was ratified by Royalty. Disaffection to the person of the Sovereign lingered in the Highlands for more than a generation, and desperate efforts were twice made to reverse by force of arms the order of succession; but no serious effort has for nearly two centuries been made to annul the marriage of the two nations; and most prolific has it been in mutual benefits. But if popular content has been general and lasting, let it not be forgotten that neither by cunning aforethought nor through the lust of domination after the fact were Scotchmen disturbed in the faith and practice of their religion; and that neither for its sake nor the yet meaner and more miserable motive of administrative jobbing, were the appointments to their national offices filched from them by the central Government in London. Administrative expropriation and sectarian intolerance have been things unknown beyond the Tweed, and the sense of the wrongs these things have generated elsewhere from sire to son can hardly be over-estimated.

The inclusion of Cowper and Sunderland in the Junto, and the unparalleled triumphs of Marlborough in the field, seemed to vindicate, beyond the reach of enmity or cavil, its governing

[1] 6th Dec., 1706.

authority, and the Queen, whose womanly ambition was buried in the tomb of her last surviving son, acquiesced more passively than ever in the rule of the Groom of the Stole. But, strong and shrewd as was the mind of Sarah, it was not proof against the temptations and bewilderments of power—the subtlest and most irresistible of intoxicants—to which greatness of fortune is a prey. She had climbed out of reach of nearly all sympathy; and though never failing in her friendship for Godolphin or wavering in her love for her husband, she ceased to be guided by either, and forgot the consideration and respect she owed to the Queen. Personal attendance and the semblance of appreciation for Royal whims grew irksome; and the absence of any show of feeling on the death of the Duke of Gloucester was believed to have broken the warm tie that so long held her Royal mistress captive to her will. The story of their gradual alienation, and the misgivings it caused in those who were near enough to perceive it, need not be recounted here.

A rival Junto, not exclusively Tory as sometimes has been supposed, but powerful in the discontented talents of both Parties, worked insidiously on the disenchanted Sovereign, and flattered her infirm memory of prerogative that had really passed away, till, in the midst of a religious panic, one after another the leading members of the first Junto were dismissed; and, in spite of another splendid victory of the Captain-General, he, too, was ignominiously cashiered. The memorable Treaty of Utrecht followed, which made peace in Europe, and sought to establish reciprocity of trade with France; but the old enmities of sect rather than those of class or party, as Swift and Steele tried to paint them, became concentrated in the question of succession to the Throne. As Anne's bodily and mental health declined, the absorbing thought of all political gamblers became, who should inherit the Crown? Had Harley, St. John, and Harcourt, Shrewsbury and Somerset, been thoroughly at one between themselves, and been content to be co-equals in a Cabinet comprising other ambitious men who sighed for office, they might

have chosen whichever kingly figure-head they wished; but their personal jealousies, though veiled from the public, superseded all other animating motives, and the world has long since been made to understand why, in the spring of 1714, the paralysis of mutual distrust disabled the second Junto, and practically brought a Government to an end, even before the death of the Queen.

On the 17th of July the Chancellor took leave of her Majesty, and sought in the country a brief respite from business; but he was soon peremptorily recalled to confer on the increasing urgency of affairs. To reconcile Oxford to removal he was offered the Dukedom of Newcastle, to which, in a suit with Lord Pelham, Cowper had thought him entitled; while his opponent should have the Earldom of Clare. But this, with a pension of £5,000 a year, the Treasurer declined, and on the 27th met his colleagues at Kensington, in presence of the Queen.

The Venerable Archbishop in his robes; Harcourt as the Oracle of Law; the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland still wearing his Gold Key of Chamberlain, and Ormond playing showily the part of Commander-in-Chief; Normanby, Lord President, and Dartmouth, Privy Seal; Oxford, Lord Treasurer, and Wyndham to answer for the Commons; Somerset, Master of the Horse, and Paulet, Steward of the Household; Bolingbroke and Bromley, Secretaries of State, had all been duly summoned, and who beside we may surmise but cannot tell; but one may be sure that none appeared unasked, and that the dramatic tale of startling intrusion rests on mere misconception or on imagination.

Oxford was interrogated anxiously by more than one of his colleagues for allowing things to drift without an effort to the brink of civil war. He defended himself with his usual versatility of detail and prolixity of argument, but refused to take any definite or decisive course. Shrewsbury, Ormond, and Harcourt were ready to support Bolingbroke, who was felt to be the only man amongst them combining the courage, energy, and know-

ledge requisite for the direction of affairs, in which, without any change of office, he had obviously gained a practical ascendancy. In the altercation that ensued, Oxford, among other reproaches, exclaimed that he would leave some people as low as he had found them, and, losing his habitual self-command, he laid his Treasurer's Staff at the feet of the Queen. The scene did not end till after midnight, when Anne, worn with perplexity and pain, left the Council Chamber, having formally intimated no decision, but taking with her the coveted symbol of official primacy, to which no one in succession was named. Bolingbroke suggested that the Treasury should be placed in commission, his brother-in-law, Wyndham, being Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons; but nothing was resolved on, and the Council was adjourned till further summoned.

To meet the Chancellor, the Viceroy, Wyndham, and Ormond, Bolingbroke entertained at Golden Square Stanhope, Pulteney, Walpole, Craggs, and Cadogan, to all of whom he offered a fair share in a new coalition. They insisted as a preliminary that the King of France should be called upon to expel the Pretender from Lorraine, but this he knew the Queen would not consent to.

Next day he summoned his old colleagues to a "Chamber Consultation" at the Cockpit, to consider who should be named in Oxford's place. The conference sat long without coming to a decision. Meanwhile the Queen grew worse, and an urgent message came from the Duchess of Ormond, who was in waiting desiring their immediate presence at Kensington. The Bishop of London, Lord Mar, and several other members of the Privy Council, who had become aware of her critical condition, attended likewise, including the Dukes of Somerset and Argyll, whose appearance has by some been said to have contributed materially to decide the fate of Parties. But Shrewsbury declared the duty that lay upon them all as Privy Councillors was to hold themselves in readiness for any exigency that might arise; and acceded to the suggestion of Argyll that the physicians should be called in

and examined. Their report was not reassuring, whereupon Bolingbroke proposed that, as it was necessary to fill the Treasurership without delay, three of their number should be permitted to wait upon her Majesty and tender the advice that the Whig Lord Lieutenant of Ireland be named. Anne received them without emotion, said a better choice could not be made, and, suffering the Chancellor to guide her hand, gave the Treasurer's Staff to Shrewsbury and bade him use it for the good of her people. This done, she relapsed into unconsciousness, from which she woke no more. Somerset's appearance at Kensington, absurdly supposed to have been decisive in defeating Jacobite designs, was, in fact, attributable simply to a message from his wife, the Mistress of the Robes, acquainting him with the dangerous illness of the Queen. He was still Master of the Horse, but had not for some time attended the Council. Peevish under fancied slights, and egregiously vain of his position as second Peer of the Realm, he chose now and then to sulk at Petworth, allowing his wrath to be assuaged by the great position his Duchess continued to hold. Argyll's attendance was as easily accounted for in such an emergency, though the chroniclers of vermiculate details have not preserved a copy of the message that brought him. In an exigency of State like that with which it was necessary to deal, few would have thought of questioning his sense of public duty in offering advice and aid. Strafford was at the Hague, and it is not certain how many other officials happened to be out of town. But the melodramatic tale of surprise and disappointment at the alleged inbreak without notice of the two Whig Dukes, as if the meeting of the 29th July at Kensington was in the nature of a Cabinet whereof they were not members, is an error that ought by this time to have been allowed to drop from histories intended for the use of schools. The Secretary of State came and went as he used to do unchallenged and unremoved, pleased with himself at the tact displayed (when there was hardly anything else to be done) in having at the critical moment named the future Lord High Treasurer -a

Whig in the estimation of violent Tories, and a Tory so-called by unreasoning Whigs.

Peter Wentworth, who was on the spot, says without emphasis, when writing to his brother: "The Dukes of Somerset and Argyll are in Council, which they say they may be though not summoned, for they were never formally struck out";[1] and there is not in the correspondence a hint of any objection having been raised to their presence. Wentworth gave a dismal account of the state of suspense at Kensington. Towards evening Dr. Arbuthnot came out of the sick-room and said that there was some change for the better, and that the Queen was then asleep. A great company, consisting of persons of all Parties, lingered to hear from hour to hour the state of the invalid. In a whisper, the physician was overheard to say it was a thousand to one if she recovered. No one ventured above his breath to conjecture what might happen.

Many influential friends of the Elector assembled at Baron Bothmar's, anxious to be assured that he was in possession of the names prescribed by the Act of Regency of 1705, should the impending event require their production.

The feeling in London is described as that of mingled hope and fear at the Queen's illness, and anxiety was not allayed by Ormond directing the guards at Kensington and St. James's to be doubled.

It was not generally known during Saturday that the physicians had given up all hope of the Queen's recovery. Conflicting expectations and desires preoccupied the minds of men, but there was no ebullition of either fear or exultation observable in any part of the town. No audible expression of hostility to the rumoured changes escaped the lips of the Hanoverians who knew what was going on, and the Jacobites in the secrets of the Palace were too conscious of the frailty of their tenure of power to talk openly or confidently.

[1] Friday, 30th July, 1714. To Lord Strafford. "Wentworth Papers": Edited by J. J. Cartwright.

One memorable fact stands out alone above the murmuring ebb and flow of passing hopes and fears—that the pretension of Executive Rule by Right Divine had ceased to be. Scarcely four years had passed since Harley had been named Chief Minister by the sole command of the Crown; while all his colleagues took their offices by similar title, and the majority in more than one Parliament tacitly acquiesced therein. Yet already the notable experiment had failed. The too confident steersman had let go his hold of the helm, and no one dared to take his place until nominated by the concurrent suffrages of fellow-statesmen assembled in Privy Council: the scarce audible ratification of the expiring Sovereign being palpably a ceremonial act of form. The Queen's state being pronounced hopeless, Shrewsbury, with the assent of Bolingbroke, prepared a letter, adopted by the other members of the Council present, apprising the Elector of her extreme danger, and advising him to repair, with all convenient speed, to Holland, where a squadron would be in waiting to receive him.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST CABINET.

1714.

Accession of George I.—Council of Regency—What would Marlborough do?—Removal of Bolingbroke—Civil List of George I.—Putting together the Cabinet—Marlborough Captain-General—Wharton and Halifax—Sunderland and Stanhope—Cowper and Townshend—Walpole and Addison—King's German Suite.

OF the many eventful changes which history recalls in the public life of England, none can be said to have taken place so noiselessly, and with so little outward jar of feelings and opinions, as that whereby the reins of Government dropped from the unconscious hand of the last of the Stuarts into those of the Provisional Council named by the Elector of Hanover to keep the realm in safety till he came. The Act of Succession invested the Heir to the Crown with the right of appointing beforehand the seven great officers of State for the time being, and such other natural-born subjects of the realm as he should deem fit to exercise the powers of Government on the demise of the Crown. George I. had furnished three persons in England with copies of the instrument duly executed by him, on the production of any one of which the Privy Council were bound to act.[1]

Harcourt, suspected by many to be ready to play whichever dynastic game could be played most safely, produced the copy confided to him as Chancellor. He broke the seal, and, being himself the first named in the list, he proceeded without hesitation to take the oath of allegiance to George I. Shrewsbury, now Lord Chancellor, did likewise, and the other great function-

[1] 6th of Anne, chap. vii.

aries in turn; and the rest of those named who were present in Kensington did the same. There was no room for question on whom the Executive Government devolved. A few hours before, Harley might have been the first officially called on to respond, but his office was now filled by another, and as a peer he was not separately mentioned. A more signal omission was that of Marlborough, who was still abroad when the list was framed, and that of his ambitious son-in-law, Lord Sunderland, for reasons never thoroughly explained. It included both Archbishops, the Dukes of Somerset, Bolton, Devonshire, Kent, Montrose, Roxburgh, and Argyll, the Earls of Pembroke, Anglesey, Carlisle, Nottingham, Abingdon, Scarborough, and Orford, Lords Townshend, Halifax, and Cowper. The new Sovereign was forthwith proclaimed. The two Houses were called together, and the members were occupied for many hours in taking the oaths of allegiance and abjuration prescribed by the last Act of Anne, and orders were issued for substituting in the Liturgy the name of the new King for that of the deceased Sovereign.

Shrewsbury sat by a two-fold title, while Oxford, who had contributed more than the rest to rebuild this bridge over the chasm, being no longer in office, and not having been otherwise nominated at Hanover, was left out altogether. Bolingbroke, still dreaming of Ministerial Coalition, and unprepared for the exigency at hand, had recommended him for Lord Treasurer. He cherished probably the hope that his languid but influential Grace would be brought into acquiescence, if not active concert, with colleagues like Ormond and Strafford in the future, as he had been in the past. He had held the Lieutenancy of Ireland after the imprisonment of Walpole and Steele, and after Marlborough had been driven into exile. Not even Somers could explain his un-partisan course to the satisfaction of the Whigs, and if he still was capable of being taunted or worried by a virago wife into retaining political office, where could he find support unless in a fusion of Parties? With the management of Foreign Affairs left in his hands, Bolingbroke would have been content to let him hold the Treasurer's Staff until it tired him, as everything else did and was likely to do. The zest of power and the nerve of ambition had not yet wholly died out in him, and an opportunity had arisen almost without example of direct-

ing the course of events. We look in vain for any political explanation of his abstinence from making the attempt. Filling three great offices at once, without a murmur of cavil or jealousy from either Party, with a record of stainless and distinguished services to the State, and endued with every grace of mien, talent, and expression, he not only took no determining part in the memorable crisis, but he seems almost to disappear in the contentions and intrigues of the time. The same abnormal want of decision that throughout life had numbed or marred all his worthiest efforts to accomplish what was great or good, paralysed him once more and rendered him in the world's account little better than a splendid cypher. He did not neglect the duties of his great position, or flinch from the liabilities and dangers that encompassed it. But, self-tormented by inappeasable doubt regarding right and wrong on every important question, the future was for him a land of dreams, not of designs—of insoluble difficulty, not of action. Somerset, on the other hand, was not likely to give up by anticipation the Mastership of the Horse on account of any passing question that might arise. Proud, rich, irritable, and blunt-spoken, he was destitute of the discernment of tendencies and motives that made fellowship in Council troublesome. Ormond commanded the Ordnance and Harcourt was head of the Law, and both were friends as intimate and dependable as Bromley and Wyndham. So far, the lines seemed to have fallen to Bolingbroke in pleasant places, and, reckoning upon Anne's continuance in life, he could afford, he fancied, to laugh at Swift's gloomy warnings of danger at hand; but the messenger that wakened him on the Sunday morning with the tidings that the Queen had ceased to be broke the thread of his sanguine anticipations.

It was not in him rapidly to organise or daringly to execute revolutionary counter-schemes. He was a superb actor: not a desperado; still less a hero. His part, when he had duly got it up beforehand, he could play to perfection, whatever that part might be. But belief had sunk so low in the socket that it shed not a gleam of light even on his own path. The romance of a perilous and clandestine design dazzled him. But in the midst of unlooked for vicissitudes as they prosaically happened he never clearly saw his way, and shrunk from going on blindfold: for there was no unselfish earnestness in him. He had wavered

and hesitated about Oxford's overthrow too long. The catastrophe came at last sooner than he expected; he was unprepared, and not merely afraid, but unable to act without preparation. And thus it happened that the blunt common-sense of men, who on other occasions he despised, baffled all his fond imaginings, elaborate plottings, and golden visions of power to come. Had he and Harcourt refused to take the oaths at that Sunday morning's Council upon any plea, however illusory or illegal, others, neither few nor obscure, would have followed their example; and an interregnum might have ensued in which, the actual powers of Administration being in their hands and those of their friends, they would for the time have been able to accomplish much. But, as Atterbury complained, the Stuart cause "was lost for want of spirit." The oaths they had taken to maintain the statutable succession might not have bound them if it began to look unmaintainable. But they had looked on and listened to each other performing the grave act of adhesion, and the mutual confidence without which conspiracy never gets beyond dangerous mutterings withered within them. Harcourt went on acting as Chancellor and Bolingbroke as Secretary of State, and they began to think that they might for a time hold on under the new *régime*. George I. was everywhere peaceably proclaimed, and Bolingbroke, to please the mob, had the largest bonfire and the finest illumination in town at his house in Golden Square.[1]

The Council of Regency was little else than a new Privy Council, remodelled as was customary at the beginning of a new reign. It was so reconstituted by Charles II. at the Restoration; by James II. at his accession; by William and Mary on their joint election; and, finally, by Anne on her coming to the Throne. Its members were empowered to act in the name of the Elector King, and in his absence to provide in all things for what concerned the peace and safety of the realm. But, unless upon definite and authentic direction by him, they could not, and did not, exercise any function of removal or appointment. An interval of several weeks consequently occurred, during which the civil and military holders of office at the death of Anne retained their positions.

[1] Peter Wentworth to his brother, 3rd August, 1714.

Every day men asked, curiously and anxiously, which way was Marlborough? The versatility of his early career and his known contempt for Party ties, might well render men doubtful as to what remained of his future. Practically, he had lived and thriven, risen to greatness and fallen from power, with the fixed belief, if he believed anything, that his countrymen in general cared not a rush for what politicians called consistency. His personal attachments were firmer than those of most men; but abstract principles or convictions he did not profess to be bound by. Nothing, probably, would have induced him to entertain projects or purposes inimical to the Queen, to whom his sense of obligation was ineffable, and whose hard treatment of him, though he could not but think it unjust, was provoked, as he bitterly felt, by the intemperate passion and folly of his wife. But, if Anne did not live to two-score and ten, who could tell him what was to come after? He had been a party to the Act of Settlement, and to its confirmation in the various statutes passed for securing the Hanoverian succession, but he could not be unconscious that a majority of the clergy, country gentlemen, and the Bar were Jacobite to the core, and he knew better than anyone then living how small a place the Elector occupied, or was personally capable of filling, in the imagination of his partisans, and how bitter were the feuds that divided them amongst themselves. Were they able to guarantee the statutable reversion of the Crown without Marlborough's assistance? And, whatever Sunderland and Cadogan might think or say, it was not clear to his pondering mind that he was not more sincerely coveted at St. Germains than at Herrenhausen.

His sagacity had led him to live abroad during the two preceding years rather than gratify his enemies by the spectacle of his humiliation at home; and no doubt with the silent belief that sooner or later a revulsion in the public mood would come. His devoted wife sympathised in everything but his opportunism. That was not in the nature of the woman. She would have stood her ground and fought it out with her foes day by day; but, seeing he was resolved, she went with him to Aix-la-Chapelle, Frankfort, and Antwerp: not pretending that she was reconciled to banishment, or that she did not long to have her children and her old friends round her at St. Albans,

or that she was insensible to the glorification of her husband by princes, magistrates, and notabilities of all sorts wherever he went in Germany and the Low Countries. She kept up an incessant correspondence with relations and confidants in England, chiefly to record the honours paid to him "by people who were not ungrateful," but partly also to explain how miserable she was at not being able to converse in any foreign language, and partly to keep up her accounts of investments in the Stocks, the payments for rent at Woodstock, and the artists who were finishing the decorations of the house in Pall Mall, for the Duke was so intolerably lazy that he would not even write a letter to his children. She continued to denounce the "Sorcerer" and his colleagues with unmitigated vehemence, and to foretell the reversion of the Crown to the Prince of Wales, whom she ceased to call the Pretender. But Sarah was full of misgivings as to what might become of her great possessions should Oxford succeed in bringing about "another revolution; after which he might pretend to be sole Minister of State to the Devil." She thought so badly of the times, that if she knew where to place her money abroad "she would draw every shilling out of England. Money in Holland was about three per cent., and that country could not long subsist after a villainous Ministry had given England up to France." If anything is to be drawn from her letters at that period, it is that she hardly knew her own mind while at a distance from home. But from the time of her return, the decision with which she formed her plans for recovering power, and the success with which she pursued them, cannot be forgotten.

Though piqued at not having been invited to Hanover, Marlborough made up his mind to return to England as soon as Parliament was up, and wrote to Bernsdorff desiring to know how he could be of most use on his arrival there.

He landed at Dover on the 1st of August, amid salutes from the forts and acclamations by the people. On his approach to the Capital he was welcomed by a long cavalcade of citizens and nobles, with the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs, who attended him to his residence in Pall Mall, where he received the congratulations of all the Ministers of Foreign Powers then in town. But, having taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy in the Lords, he withdrew to Holywell, and subsequently to Bath.

Bothmar in vain protested, in the name of his now Royal master, that the omission at Hanover which Marlborough took for distrust, was only inadvertence, which, to the haughty spirit of Sarah, seemed only to make bad worse. "Upon my knees I begged that he would never accept of any employment. I said everybody that liked the Revolution and the security of the law had a great esteem for him; that he had a greater fortune than he wanted; and that a man who had had such success, with such an estate, would be of more use to any Court than they could be of to him."

What, in fact, she deprecated, her passionate words do not clearly express, but what she meant is not doubtful or far to seek. Marlborough, with her counsel and aid, at the commencement of the last reign, had put together, and held together, a Government of greater power and claim to be remembered than any that had gone before or was likely to follow. Was it in the nature of the woman that she should not desire that he should do so again? Without a rival in diplomacy or arms, the testimonies to his skill in negotiation, and genius in command, had been set thick without example, and had struck ever-widening roots in the public mind. No one, probably, understood better than Sarah the poet's warning against the delusion of escaping envy; but she chose rather to commute the penalty into a regular charge, which was to be borne unshrinkingly, and even proudly, as token of pre-eminent distinction. What she haughtily repudiated, and was anxious above all things Marlborough should spurn, was the notion of his being made an instrument in the new mechanism instead of having the control and guidance he had had before. If Oxford or Townshend had led Robethon and Bernsdorff into the belief that their unaccustomed master might choose for himself the men to govern England, he must be undeceived. The mansion in Pall Mall had more secure whispering galleries with St. Stephen's than the old Palace of St. James's. The impending choice of Ministers would bring a blight or blessing on the realm. Informally, but emphatically, it was resolved, by those who were taken into confidence at Marlborough House, that if the drama of a Constitutional Executive was to be successful, the cast of parts must be made with intimate knowledge of the capabilities of each performer, and with general agreement that the company would act

together. If the new Monarch had neither English ideas in his head nor English language on his lips, it was all the more essential that those who were to act and speak in his name should win and hold their places by showing unison of purpose and harmony of utterance.

The pen of Addison as Secretary was enlisted by the Council as the ablest to countervail any that might be dipped in discontent. With Swift he had had more than one round in journalism, with results so doubtful that the friends of both thought each might be well satisfied that the contention was not prolonged. But in the art and mystery of State-paper writing the essayist was not at his best. At the Council table he was as unsuggestive as the gilt inkstand; and when it came to the critical duty of framing an Act of State, his knack of phrase was paralysed by the greatness of the occasion. Halifax snatched the pen from his hand and did the duty of scribe in his readier way. Addison wished it to be understood among his friends that there was some notion of naming him one of the Principal Secretaries of State, but that he had the modesty to decline. It is hardly credible, however, that in the scramble for power in the first days of the new dynasty he should have been seriously thought of in that critical capacity. The fascination of his style and his personal amenability were his chief merits in the politician's eye; but with rumours of counter-revolution on all sides, such qualities were of little worth. For a Chief Secretary in Ireland, where a Viceroy chose to be absolute, he was just the man, and Sunderland made up his mind that he would send him thither.

Bolingbroke, meanwhile, was suffered to discharge his former duties, and he took care to observe a scrupulous neutrality in all respects. But things could not long continue as they were, and through the Hanoverian Ministers of George I. the incompatibility was daily more decidedly expressed of his continuance in Executive office. In reply to these representations, the Elector sent a letter to the Lords Justices, which gave great satisfaction, and Halifax, who ascribed it to the advice of Bernsdorff, bade Robethon say how glad they all were that the Baron was to accompany his master to England.

If the new reign could be inaugurated by measures to revive

the drooping spirit of commerce, it would be a great glory and happiness to his Majesty.[1]

At the end of August authority came for the Secretary's removal. Shrewsbury, Cowper, and Somerset were directed to ask him for the Seals, and take possession of official papers, which were placed under lock and key. The blow could hardly have been unanticipated, and yet, with all his mastery of look and gesture, he owned that "the manner of his removal shocked him for at least two minutes." He was not thereby intimidated, he said, from any consideration of Whig malice and power; but the grief of his soul was that he saw plainly the Tory Party was gone;[2] and he used the same language to Swift and Harcourt.

Addison thought Bolingbroke's removal had put "a seasonable check to an interest that was making in many places for members in the next Parliament, and was very much relished by the people, who ascribed to him in a great measure the decay of trade and public credit." He begged of Robethon to find terms submissive enough to make the humble offers of his duty acceptable to his Majesty.[3]

On the morrow of the Queen's death the price of public Securities wavered inconsiderably; but, as compared with the period preceding her illness, they did not fall. At Midsummer, Bank Stock was 123, South Sea Shares 87, and India 123. By the end of August, Bank of England Shares were believed to be worth ten pounds more, and speculation had so far revived that South Sea Debentures stood at 96 and East India Company's at 134.[4] It was not easy to make away with these suffrages of confidence in the new order of things.

Atterbury might repine at Bolingbroke's untimely resolution, as he deemed it, and he, in his turn, might deplore the apathy which he had striven against in vain, but Oxford read more clearly the realisations of his prognostics, and when not in wine thanked God that Presbyterianism was, after all, not likely to be in danger.

To carry on the business of the Executive it was necessary to

[1] Halifax to Robethon, 24th August, 1717.—*MS.*
[2] To Atterbury.
[3] 4th Sept. 1714.—*MS.*
[4] *Flying Post*, June to Sept. 1774.

renew the Civil List, out of which most of the salaries of public servants were paid. The Lords Justices resolved to ask for the new Sovereign the same amount that had been hitherto voted, and £700,000 was, therefore, proposed. The Tories, to outbid their rivals, suggested, instead, that the sum should be £1,000,000 a year, but the amendment was not pressed. Mr. Conyers was proposed by Walpole as Chairman of Committee of Supply, and carried against Sir W. Wyndham, whom the majority would have preferred. There was evidently no disposition to array the strength of opposing Parties in conflict prematurely, and on the 25th August Parliament was prorogued. For the ensuing months the Council of Regency governed. The French Ambassador, apprehending personal insult from the populace, asked for military protection, and a detachment of the Train-bands was ordered to guard the Legation. A day or two afterwards he acquainted the Council with the resolution of his master to maintain unbroken the friendly relations hitherto subsisting between the two kingdoms, and Lord Peterborough arrived from Paris reporting the unqualified assurances given him in audience by Louis XIV., of his determination to recognise faithfully the Elector's accession to the Crown.

Marlborough was again encircled by those whose undisputed chief he had so long been. For them the paramount question was, what would he do? Less anxious for office than he had once been, he was as eager as his indomitable wife for restitution of the dignities and emoluments of which he had been deprived; and for this an Administration able to guide Parliament, to control the Court, and reliable to conserve his interests was necessary.

Halifax had hoped through Bernsdorff to prove himself best entitled to be the head of the Ministry, while George I. carefully avoided the open avowal of any especial preference. Sunderland expected to be Secretary of State, but he was outrun in the race for precedency by a competitor who had been the schoolfellow of Walpole in the days of the Revolution. Charles, second Viscount Townshend, had early entered public life, and in employments at home and abroad had made a considerable figure and name. He was no orator, and his impatient temper often rendered his utterance confused and his diction inaccurate. But he was full of energy and ambition, was imbued with strong

attachment to the new form of Government, and was fond of the bustle of business and the show of power. He had made himself several influential friends among the Dutch, who commended his useful qualities to the Elector; but he did not rely on their good offices alone. He had contrived to win the confidence of Bothmar, the Hanoverian envoy in London; but so carefully did he avoid all appearance of preference, that when upon the accession he was nominated Secretary of State many of the great Whigs were surprised and something more. It was no time, however, for dissension or even debate. Their political adversaries still lingered on the steps of power.

To Townshend was ascribed the initial error into which the expectant Sovereign had fallen, of omitting Marlborough and his immediate connections from the *ad interim* Council of Regency. Some time before the illness of the Queen, he had formed the design of gaining the ear of the narrow conclave at Herrenhausen, and he contrived to make much way with Bothmar and Bernsdorff when few of his own countrymen were doing little more than hedging against possible contingencies in letters of florid but empty compliment. Nobody, in the Spring of 1714, practically reckoned on an immediate demise of the Crown; and Townshend, like other men once entangled in intrigue, forgot the prudence which, after all, is best observed by politicians from a sense of impending responsibility.[1] The Hanoverian Ministers and their agents in England were filled with suspicions of the Marlborough party, for such, though not in name, it had been, and was likely to become again; and to humour their distrust, without which he could not easily hope to secure their confidence, Townshend unwisely filled up the list of Lords Justices without naming the great soldier or his aspiring son-*in*-law. His own antecedents were not inconsiderable. His family had been staunch Loyalists in the days when the grandfather of the Elector was King, and they had adhered to the side of Prerogative during the Restoration. Taking his seat as a young man in the Upper House as one of the Opposition, he had been easily engaged by Godolphin to support a coalition Government, and, once freed from the ties of party, he had drifted into the opposite ranks. Marlborough was his leader and colleague at Gertruydenberg; Walpole his neighbour and

[1] April, 1714. Hanover Papers.—*MS.*

friend in Norfolk. It is possible that the idea had not occurred to either that Townshend was making a game for himself; but so it came to pass that, ere the eventful accident of the Queen's illness suddenly compelled every man to show his hand, the ambitious Viscount found himself singularly favoured by the Hanoverian Court, and made himself responsible for slighting a political connection without which its accession and security would be seriously imperilled. The good sense subsequently shown by Townshend on many occasions of difficulty might alone have spared historians the necessity of distinguishing between his nomination as the first of the Ministers who were appointed in the new reign, and his imaginary appointment as First Minister. His position as Secretary of State and his connection by marriage with the influential family of Pelham have misled writers on the subject; but the confidential detail of how the first Cabinet was made dispels the error.

Marlborough's pre-eminence was so incontestable that, had there been any idea of Premiership, his claim could not have been disputed; and had his self-love slumbered, it would have been peremptorily awakened by her whose jealousy regarding all that concerned his greatness and glory never slept. But there could be no competition for a dignity theretofore unknown; and in a Government formed mainly of his friends, he was content with the old authority, patronage, and influence of Captain-General.

The Duke of Montagu was named High Constable of England; his Duchess, Marlborough's eldest daughter, First Lady-in-waiting to the Princess of Wales; Lord Bridgwater, husband of a younger daughter, Chamberlain to the Prince; and Lord Godolphin, another son-in-law, Cofferer of the Household.

Charles, second Earl of Sunderland, had entered public life in 1695 as Member for the close borough of Tiverton; and though the remembrance of his father's perfidy and apostasy still threw an ominous shadow on his path, the precocity of his talents and attainments, the rare decorum of his life, and his alliance with the House of Cavendish rendered him an object of especial pride and hope to the party whose principles he espoused. In the late reign his fortune and ability would hardly have singled him out as a hostage for the concession of administrative power the great Whig families required; and till his second marriage with the

daughter of the Captain-General, his prospect of admission to high office was remote. He had made himself an object of distrust and dislike by the public avowal of extreme opinions, and the assumption of pitiless loyalty in the case of his sister, Lady Clancarty. He was, in short, unpopular, not with the crowd who knew little about him, but in the Palace and in Society; and though confessedly "not the properest man for the post, yet being my Lord Marlborough's son-in-law, the Whigs chose to recommend him to be one of the Secretaries of State in 1706, because, as they expressed themselves, it was driving the nail that would go."[1]

But not even the concession of the Seals could appease his thirst for predominant party power. Again and again he tried to organise resistance in Parliament to the retention of Prince George of Denmark as Lord High Admiral, whom he persisted in describing as capable of being used to bring about a second Restoration, and he laid before Godolphin a plan for constituting a Board of Admiralty, with Pembroke as its First Lord, whose collective decisions and orders should in future be indispensable for the Government of the Navy. Godolphin, who thought of nothing new or strange that would displease the Queen, and undertook nothing of importance without previous agreement with Marlborough, put aside the suggestion *sine die*, while telling its author that he did not disapprove of it. In confidential letters to Holles Newcastle, Wharton, Somers, Orford, Halifax, and Devonshire, he urged them to use their influence to defeat the Court candidate for the Speakership, and to take other means of convincing the Lord Treasurer and the Captain-General that the country was lost if all the Tories were not driven out of office. His unyielding and imperious temper made him, ere long, so distasteful to the Queen, that before her final quarrel with the Marlboroughs she insisted on his removal. He laboured arduously to keep his political friends together, and by degrees contrived to make himself regarded as the chief defender of the interests of the Dissenters in the Upper House, and as likely to be their champion in a future reign. And now, if not Secretary of State, might he not have some equally important place? As the presumptive successor to Marlborough, he had learned to temporise on many critical subjects, and to

[1] "Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough," 160.

adopt not a few of the maxims of coalition that he had formerly treated as rank blasphemy. Sarah's influence prevailed with him to accept for the time being the Irish Viceroyalty, though it offered no immediate scope for the exercise of his love of power, and though to the world without it seemed a post of secondary importance. It had indeed been held by men of the highest rank and pretension; but since Strafford's time, no Lord Lieutenant had been able to exert a power really equal to that of Secretary of State, and from the day Sunderland had been divested of the Seals by the late Queen, for his unbending assumption of executive authority, his craving had been for their repossession. Sarah, who understood the boundless ambition of the man, and who already had begun to realise in his children the broken dream of family greatness, was alone capable of understanding his morbid irritability at what was now proposed. Did she whisper in his ear what his amiable and loving but prosaic wife was incapable of imagining—Thou shalt be chief hereafter?—or would his egotism without such incense have allowed him to adjourn silently the fixed purpose of his life for a time, and feign complacence, though he had it not? But there were precedents enough for a Governor-General of Ireland governing from Westminster; and, with the understanding that he was not to quit his home in Piccadilly, he deigned at last to accept the indignity, as he considered it, of being called Vice-King.

As he was not expected to throw away his time beyond sea, but, like Montrose, to be responsible in Council for the conduct of affairs in an appendant realm, for which, with the rank and pay of Viceroy, he was to be Minister, it was essential that he should have for his legate *a latere* a man of ability and pliancy, on whom he could depend, and from Shrewsbury, lately returned from Ireland, he gathered readily who was most worthy of his choice.

Sir A. Brodrick, M.P. for Orford in the Parliament of the Restoration, was one of the Commissioners appointed to settle conflicting claims in Ireland after the Civil War. Both he and his brother became possessed of extensive estates in West Cork; and while the elder branch of the family continued to reside in Middlesex and to hold an influential position in English public life, the transplanted branch struck early root in Irish soil and

by adoption came to be regarded, not without reason, as more Irish than the Celts themselves. Alan Brodrick, being a second son, was bred to the Law, and so early gained distinction that in 1695 he was made Solicitor-General, and in 1707, Attorney-General. By the Whigs he was named Chief Justice in 1710, but was superseded the following year by their successors. In recognition of the independence he had always shown in advocating the abatement of the Test Act, even when in office, under an intolerant Administration, and as a tribute to his eminent ability and learning, the Irish Commons chose him unanimously their Speaker in 1713. Shrewsbury, who at heart was with him, approved their choice. Sunderland was too glad to have such a man for Chancellor and Chairman of the House of Lords.

He resolved to have Addison for Chief Secretary. Well aware of the scramble for patronage likely to ensue on the arrival of the new King; and feeling that mere literary merit would too certainly be jostled aside by sturdier pretensions, Addison had taken care to ply Robethon with eager iteration of his claims founded on the services he had rendered. He forwarded a congratulatory poem by Tickle, and a copy of a preamble composed by himself to the patent of the Prince of Wales, with the draft proclamation issued by the Lords Justices, offering a hundred thousand pounds for the apprehension of the Pretender. A fortnight later he addressed a business-like document to the new Sovereign, setting forth how much he was out of pocket by his Secretaryship to the Regents in the past six weeks, and hoping confidently his indefatigable services to the Hanoverian succession might not be forgotten. Nor eventually were they: Sunderland having made it a point that he should be Chief Secretary for Ireland. Addison did not conceal his disappointment, but thought it would be imprudent to refuse. When, however, his abitrary patron sought to exact from him the pledge that he would not see his old friend, the Dean of St. Patrick's, the better nature of the man broke from the bondage of time-serving and party, and he declined to give any promise of the kind.

Wharton's party zeal and energy in self-assertion rendered it impossible that he should be overlooked in the re-distribution of administrative parts. His stay in Ireland as Chief Governor was brief and unhonoured; but he gave little heed to the upbraiding

of his critics in the Press, who compared him to Verres, the misruler of Sicily; and there was no one in the Peers with the courage of Cicero to call him to account. Exposure seemed to do him no harm; expostulation did him no good, and he rioted on while his party was in opposition. Now their turn was come again, his tarnished aid in elections and in many other ways, was not to be despised, and it was secured by the Privy Seal and a marquisate.

There were other members of the all-powerful family connection to be thought of, for whom a position must be found. Young Lord Pelham had just come into his great inheritance, and by all-aspiring mothers was courted as the best match in the world of fashion. Townshend had married his sister, and naturally sought to promote his expanding views of dignity and importance. An earldom was the least that might be conferred on the successor to the fortune of Holles Newcastle, and though there were disputes about the revival of the old Barony of Clare, who should forbid the King making him an earl by that coveted name? In the sultry days of deliberation at Pall Mall, when the whole scheme of future Government was putting together, Townshend fell back into the secondary rank to which he naturally belonged; and, content with the prospect of being Secretary of State, he found ready acquiescence in the stipulation that his young relative, Lord Pelham, then at Cambridge, should be thus advanced in the Peerage. The Northern Department, which included, with some exceptions, the administration of domestic affairs and the Appellate control of matters of primary moment in Scotland and Ireland, was to be his portion. His assiduity in business, acquaintance with county politics and Quarter Session ways of looking at public life, rendered him a safe and unforgetful referee on a thousand commonplace matters of dispute which a foreign King, with a foreign household, would have been hopelessly perplexed if called upon continually to deal with. But his temper, which even his admirers owned was arrogant, lent a colour to the conduct of ordinary business that was destined to contribute no little to the unpopularity of the new reign. Kind to his children and considerate to his servants, he was usually spoken of as good-natured and humane. But a curious and instructive side light on his character as a Home Minister is intermittently struck, as from

the old flint and steel, by the guarded expostulation of Defoe, who knew too well what was going on, and whose nobler nature shrank, often to shuddering, from the ruthless exercise of power, in whose pay his impecuniosity tempted him to live, but to whose faults he could not shut his eyes. When Townshend came to represent the varied and complicated action of Government in the House of Lords, he was often deficient in ready reply and impromptu defence; not from want of knowledge or decision in judgment, but because he was provokingly ungracious and wantonly aggressive, where others would have shown more discretion by escaping from a difficulty in a cloud of brilliant words, or a timely appeal to the patriotism of forbearance.

Bothmar and Robethon were soon convinced that Townshend had led their master into an error too dangerous to be acknowledged or adhered to, in supposing that an Administration that could see him safe or hold the reins of rule could be formed without Marlborough and his personal friends. After a visit to Bath and a short stay at Holywell, where he said he was happier than anywhere else, the Duke returned to Marlborough House, and there the consultations, in which Sunderland, as formerly, was the most unyielding, and Walpole the most knowing and suggestive, were resumed. What was to be done with the Treasury? Godolphin was dead, and no Whig had succeeded in building up such a financial reputation as his pupil the "Country Mouse." But years had passed, and it was necessary to have somebody who knew without prompting all the fiscal wisdom of the Egyptians, and how they could make money appear by their enchantments whenever it was wanted. Nobody had had such experience of the need, or, to say the truth, the indispensability, of such magic as Marlborough. Ten years before he had refused to mount the war-horse at his door unless Godolphin would undertake for its keep and stabling: and when his friend was displaced he could hardly be restrained from dismounting ere his work was done. They had now times of peace, and he had probably made up his mind never to cross the sea again on foreign service. But without a master hand at the Treasury in whom he could implicitly confide, or, at a pinch, imperatively bend to his will, the worn and world-sick General would not be involved again in the toilsome and thankless task of Government. There is no evidence that he cared personally

for Halifax ; but there was, in fact, litle choice, and, after all, the families of Churchill and Montagu had come to be akin. In a Court where there was to be no Queen, she who had been politically greater than the Queen could not resume her old pre-eminence ; and Sarah was content that her daughters should have between them all the distinctions she had once enjoyed. Cadogan was likewise to be recognised and rewarded. He had followed Marlborough's fortunes throughout his great campaigns, and sat beside him without shrinking in the cold shade of Opposition. No personal defect or fault had been laid to his charge, and he had shown in diplomacy the same aptitude and resource that he had been credited with in war. It was, therefore, decreed by the dispensers of all that was worth having that he should be sent as envoy to the States General.

Halifax had persuaded himself that by his debating talents he was entitled to lead his party in the Peers, and that by his past experience no one had such claims to paramount rule as a financier. But his dream of pre-eminence was not realised, and he was fain to be content with the first seat at the Board of Treasury, and an earldom, his nephew being allowed to retain the Auditorship of the Exchequer, a place designed to be a check upon every branch of the department. According to Sarah's unsparing pen, there never was a falser man : and such his thrift that "when he dined alone he ate upon pewter to save his plate."

Halifax had used his leisure and sinecure income in cultivating what no one in his time but Orford had systematically striven to do—the personal goodwill and (if they believed him) personal sympathy of men of letters, dramatists, and artists, without regard to nice distinctions of creed or party. Addison and Congreve were almost made to believe that they were equals as well as intimates. Was it in human nature that they should not speak and write of him as the one man in all England they wished to see in office again ? Swift was less easily cajoled. Before he changed sides, he liked greatly dining at the great little man's table ; but even while only fasting vicar of Laracor he did not like being bidden to be brought in with the highways and hedges of literature. Few of his craft were, perhaps, as squeamish ; and chairs were seldom vacant at Mæcenas' table. When gathered round, his learning, tact, eloquence, anecdote,

humour, wit—like the charm of an unseen solvent—melted for the hour all the jarring prejudices of the men who never else blended in unison, and whatever recollection dwelt upon each memory on the morrow, and however waywardly or peevishly chequered by envy or disappointment, it was sure to add something of its hue to the concurrence of what men call opinion, that is the breath of a statesman's popularity. Others have since then tried the like arts of conjuration; but few, like Charles Montagu, brought it to perfection. Cold-hearted critics in our times rub their eyes and wonder if there is any misprint in the bursts of adulation and paroxysms of praise that were addressed to this Master of Literary Revels. Congreve had the face to inscribe his collected works to the Statesman who, if he had followed the bent of his genius in poetry instead of politics, would have eclipsed the aggregate fame of Hellenic song.

If Halifax in his earlier official days could find no worthier mode of expressing sympathy for a brother wit than making Congreve a Commissioner for Hackney Coaches, and subsequently, of Wine Licences, he hoped now to have the power of doing something better for his friend, and he did not fail to use it. The dramatist had ceased to write, and preferred being known as a man of fashion and indispensable friend of the Duchess of Montagu; but the man to whom Steele vied with Pope in doing honour, and for whose company politicians and players contended, was worth identifying (if it could be done economically) with the new Administration. A Clerkship of the Pipe, £500 a year, and the stay-at-home Secretaryship of Jamaica, £700 a year, might be judiciously conferred on the classic whose help in his best efforts Dryden did not disdain, and whom Swift only blamed for not writing more. Congreve thriftily enjoyed his sinecures for several years, and left her Grace in his will sufficient to buy a diamond necklace and erect a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

The declining health of Somers unfitted him for any active employment, but as an adviser he was thought indispensable, and with a seat in the Cabinet he was allotted an additional pension, which he did not live long to enjoy.

The Presidency of the Council was assigned to Nottingham, who had been one of the coalition at the beginning of the late reign, and who had only left them when bishoprics and deaneries

were given, he thought, too exclusively to low Churchmen. But he had little sympathy with non-jurors, and none with Jacobites; and by degrees he came to act on many important questions with the Whig majority in the House of Lords. His reunion with them in office would serve more than argument to show that the new Sovereign would be advised to reign as head of the nation, not as the chief of a party. Marlborough, Shrewsbury, and Halifax, who had never undervalued his worth, were glad to have him for a colleague, and even Wharton did not object.

Devonshire, it was agreed, should be once more invited to become Lord Steward. He was the one man of his party who had troops of friends and no enemies, and the rebuilding of his house in Piccadilly being completed, its gates were opened to that un-partizan hospitality on which they never have been closed. Shrewsbury, from the first, declared his intention of relinquishing the Treasurer's staff and the Lieutenancy of Ireland, preferring only to retain the post of Chamberlain. But as his income was much less than his boastful wife would have the world believe, he was gratified at her being named Lady-in-Waiting to the Princess of Wales, and that his past services in office should be acknowledged by a pension of £2,000 a year. Everyone desired that Cowper should again be Chancellor, and the victor of La Hogue, though personally unpopular, was, for the sake of his connections, named First Lord of the Admiralty.

Argyll would fain have had his brother Islay made Secretary of State for Scotland, but Marlborough's veto quenched the claim. He was recommended for the office of Clerk Register, but the Portfolio was allotted to Montrose, who had rendered essential service at the Union. He was one of the sixteen representative Peers, and in the late reign had been Lord President and Privy Seal in Scotland, but had lately been removed for his intractability to the policy of Orford. He was named by the Elector one of the Lords of Regency. What place should be found for Argyll? None, if the absolute will of the Captain-General were to be obeyed, for he had never concealed his distrust and dislike of his most distinguished Lieutenant. MacCullamore had shown his resentment on the critical occasion when Marlborough's conduct was impugned in

the House of Lords; and nothing had subsequently occurred calculated to bring about a reconciliation. It was not a time, however, to be nice. Argyll was still the hero of the popular imagination north of the Tweed; and it was decided that he should be Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, and Groom of the Stole to the Prince of Wales. Thus, without being a Minister, he was placed in a position of conspicuous rank and influence, whence ere long fresh jealousies and distrust arose.

Henry Boyle was thought of for the Exchequer, not for any special knowledge of finance, but because in the late reign he had been Secretary of State without blame, and was still *personâ gratâ* at Marlborough House. He preferred, however, a peerage with leisure and independence; and the Speaker, Sir Richard Onslow, consented to occupy the second seat at the Treasury while waiting for his summons to the Upper House, and Henry Boyle became Lord Carlton.

Who, then, was to be Joint Secretary of State? Horace Walpole by his own account suggested the victor of Almenara, and persuaded Townshend that Stanhope "had a fruitful and luxuriant genius in foreign affairs, which he hoped might be checked or pruned by him as his colleague, and which he never imagined would prove wild, mad, and ungrateful."[1] At a moment so critical, vigour and unity were indispensable in the joint holders of the Seals. What the elder might be thought by some to lack in versatility and popularity, the younger ought to supply. By foreign diplomatists the Viscount was not unappreciated or under-valued; but in the Commons Townshend had never sat; in Court circles his worth was discounted as wanting hereditary quickness and grace, and in the City he was unknown. On the other hand, the General was a hero who, in the Homeric manner, had challenged and slain in single combat Amezaga, the Captain of the enemy's host, in set array. He had subsequently gone through the romantic vicissitudes of captivity in foreign parts, only to be ransomed and to return to talk as well in Parliament as if he had been bred to that function. With Pulteney or with Steele, in point of rhetoric, he could not compare: but who were they in parliamentary connection to be considered?

He had married Lucy, daughter of Governor Pitt, lately re-

[1] H. Walpole the elder to Etough (for many years Chaplain to Sir Robert Walpole), 1st Sept., 1752.—*MS.*

turned with fabulous wealth from India, and who was forming a not inconsiderable family party in the House of Commons. One of her brothers had wedded the daughter of Lord Grandison, another the heiress of Lord Londonderry, whose title was subsequently transferred to him, and a third the daughter of Lord Falkland. These were considerations not to be overlooked in the choice of Ministers in the Lower House. Many of Stanhope's earlier years were passed at Madrid, where his father was resident Minister. While still a youth he served with distinction under Lord Peterborough at the siege of Barcelona, and anxious to acquire a knowledge of other Continental States and their languages, he was allowed to make a prolonged tour in Italy and Germany.

At Namur he served as a volunteer, and William III. gave him a colonelcy of Foot. He was elected for Newport, and afterwards for Cockermouth. In the War of the Succession he was entrusted with diplomatic as well as military functions. With the rank of General and the character of Envoy to the Court of Charles II., he assumed the conduct of affairs in 1708 on behalf of Great Britain in the Peninsula ; planned, and led in person, the attack on Port Mahon, and secured the conquest of Minorca.

He and Walpole became political friends. Between the capacity of the two men there was indeed no comparison, but by lineage and connection the General took precedence, and each possessed knowledge the other felt to be imperatively required for the successful working of constitutional rule. Bred in diplomacy, Stanhope was well worth trying in the management, if not the direction, of foreign affairs. It was something, too, that Townshend and he were personal friends ; and their correspondence during the period they were colleagues shows how entire was the confidence the former reposed in him. Yet it has been said that when Walpole and others suggested his appointment as Secretary of State, he was piqued at being, as he thought, misplaced, and not without difficulty was convinced that the offer was made sincerely, without any idea of anticipated failure. Throughout life, his best qualities were frequently obscured by uncontrolled bursts of temper, but, in the main, he was amiable, generous, and upright, untinged by the avarice or inveteracy that marred the reputation of so many of his contemporaries.

Looking back through the historic mist that shrouds the acts and motives of a distant time, it is not easy to discern precisely how the son of a Norfolk squire, who married for a fortune the daughter of the Lord Mayor, pushed his way not merely to the front of Parliamentary battle, but to a leading part in the confidential councils of Marlborough House.

He had entered Parliament at six-and-twenty as M.P. for King's Lynn, and in 1705 was thought worth making a Lord of the Admiralty. Who knows exactly why? There was little room for the most active-minded and glib-tongued partisan at St. Stephen's beyond the traditional one of keeping a House and voting with Ministers; but one who, impatient at being nothing, had made up his mind to be something, found a way that nobody else would take the trouble to show him. Two years later Sarah obtained for him the Treasurership of the Navy, which he acknowledged by letter as a great obligation. He was glad to act as Vice-Secretary at War for Cardonnel whom the Duke had taken with him to Flanders. But when the Harley and Masham cabal began the Duchess thought he played a double part to keep well with both sides. She says he treated her afterwards with all the folly and insolence imaginable, when he had come into great power, and acted as if he were King.[1] But in September, 1714, he was still deferential, and still, in a certain sense, a favourite.

He was said to have overspent himself in hospitalities in the latter days of Queen Anne. The heads of the Party were now willing to make it up to him and give him the Pay Office and the Governor's quarters at Chelsea Hospital, if he would undertake the essential work of what was called doing the King's business in the House of Commons.

Consulted throughout the pending deliberations, he consented, if he did not ask, to be Paymaster-General. Seldom filled but by a Commoner, the office afforded, to one who understood so well how to use them, especial compensations. If peace lasted, these would probably be no more than the War Office had previously yielded; but, in case of war, the dues and perquisites would, as he well knew, be unlimited, save by his own discretion. Sir Stephen Fox had made his fortune after the Restoration by his careful husbandry of so rich a farm, and after him his son

[1] Memoirs of Duchess of M.

held it till the Revolution, when the notorious Lord Ranelagh made his own of it. In 1703 the office was divided, Charles Fox being reappointed to that relating to Foreign Service, while John Howe had the control of the military establishments at home. After them, Brydges, created Duke of Chandos, condescended to accept the post in consideration of the profits that appertained to it, and held it till it was again divided between Thomas Moore and Edward Nicholas.

Walpole's still undeveloped powers in debate did not entitle him to dispute with Halifax the first place at the Treasury, and he wisely resolved to wait for the reversion, which fell sooner than he could have counted on; but his courage, energy, and versatile skill, rendered him from the first an essential element in the new scheme of rule. Personally he had about him little that commended him at Marlborough House: he was blunt, coarse, and saucy—qualities which the presiding spirit there could overlook when convenient, but which not the less offended her sense of dignity and her inappeasable craving for deference to her opinions, presumable or expressed, which she retained long after she had ceased to be *La Première*. Walpole could tell her, from day to day, as no one else could, how the weather set in speculation and finance. Others were ready to inquire, if she wished, what was said in the City and at Amsterdam. Arbuthnot had many loyal and accomplished rivals ready to fetch and carry, but that all implied, in more or less degree, revealing her far-sighted wishes and aims, and at best she knew that none of them really knew what, for certain, she wanted to know. Walpole asked no questions, and wanted no time to consider. Like Sarah, he believed in gold if in nothing else, and when there was news of importance, or rumours perplexing, or tidings propitious, they talked shorthand to each other, and more than even the opinion of Sunderland or Cowper on political subjects the great Duchess valued that of Walpole. That they should have quarrelled eventually, when times changed, was, perhaps, inevitable; but in the days of the Regency, when the great families were conferring together how they might build up such a stronghold of oligarchic power as could not be shaken, a self-contained man like Walpole exercised in secret council regard and consideration which few, if any, except Marlborough himself, could command. The only services thought of, or deemed worth thinking of, by men forming

an Administration were services to come; and these were what everybody credited Walpole with without his naming them.

His early prudence and tact in the management of men, and the confidence early reposed in him by those in high office with whom he had to deal, made him the trusty instrument of the head of the great coalition in his dealings with the Whig party.

The office of Secretary at War, created under Charles II., was of comparatively small account, and had cognizance rather of civil wants and necessities than of military duties. So little political consequence attached to it, that it was at first bestowed on Sir W. Clarke, who had acted in a similar capacity under Cromwell, with the title of Secretary to the Council of War, and subsequently on Mr. Locke, promoted thereto from a clerkship in the Treasury. By the time, however, the hereditary Monarchy had been overthrown, and government by Act of the Three Estates of the Realm had come into fashion, the Secretary at War, like all other heads of departments and sub-departments, became a political functionary, had a seat in the House of Commons, and took part, when bidden, in debate. Walpole was chosen, when Godolphin required all the help he could muster round him, to keep the tallies of the huge outlay in the Low Countries. It was a time of universal laxity, and of jobbing on a scale that through the best historic telescopes can hardly be made out clearly. The member for Lynn was not a man to neglect his official opportunities, and he grew rich apace. Presents—what would now be called discounts—were the disorder of the day, and when Walpole was not engrossed by speculation in the City, he indulged in amenities at Whitehall that sometimes were worth several hundred pounds. Opposition had its eye upon him, and in resentment for never-failing votes against them, and broad jokes at their expense, harder to bear, they resolved to call him to account for bribery and corruption. All was, of course, denied, then explained, partially extenuated, and at length confessed. The House of Commons voted him guilty, and he was sent to the Tower, where he was allowed to live a lazy and luxurious life till, with the Parliament, his imprisonment expired, none of his contemporaries, either friends or foes, appearing to think the worse of Robin for having been caught feeding too fat at the public expense. Such was the beginning of a great career. It is important to observe that,

from its first creation, the Secretaryship at War was strictly regarded as civil and not military; and Lord Palmerston, who himself filled it so honourably in later times, and who took no ordinary pains to make himself master of its history, declared that he could find no instance of the appointment having been conferred on an officer of the army.[1] The Secretary at War was at all times bound to take his orders from the Treasury, the Secretary of State, or, up to a certain period, from the Sovereign himself. But the pay of the troops, their pensions and allowances, and all that appertained to the finance of the Army, was confided to a new functionary, with a separate establishment of clerks and assistants, called the Paymaster of the Forces. Neither were at first Ministers of State, but both had seats in Parliament. The Paymaster was bound to account for the disbursements, wherewith he was held personally chargeable, until formally acquitted by an auditor of the Exchequer. Henry St. John, successfully paying court to the Marlboroughs, was made Secretary at War when Harley first obtained the Seals, and went out of office with him in 1708, to be succeeded by Robert Walpole.

It would not have done to make Walpole again Secretary at War, for Parliament, though ready to forget his faults, was not always safe to be trifled with on points of form; and there a vote of expulsion stood on the minutes unrescinded, and but four years old. He himself thought he could do better by taking the Pay Office and leaving his former post (in the interval occupied by Lansdowne, Wyndham and Gwyn) to the friend who had steadily adhered to him in his time of trouble, and whose repute as a debater was already deemed superior to his own. So Pulteney became Secretary at War. Craggs offered himself in preference for the post, but was told by the Duke (as probably the easiest way of getting rid of importunity) that if he could persuade his new Majesty to appoint him no one would be more welcome to him. The sanguine aspirant could not see that his Grace was civilly fooling him, and when George I. arrived Craggs actually asked an audience to present his claims and credentials as a practised official store-keeper; but he could only extract at intervals an unexplanatory "*non*," and he was glad eventually to put up with the consolation of half the Postmaster-Generalship.

[1] Palmerston's Memoirs.

In previous Parliaments Pulteney had won great distinction, if not influence, by his versatility and eloquence, equal to that of Wyndham and Cowper; while in debating power, strictly so-called, after St. John left the Commons, he was unequalled. In the scramble for office the ties of personal or political friendship were too frequently forgotten. "Not any three held together;" and, as needs must, old friends often stood in one another's way. Pulteney told the tale himself, which some affected to doubt, that on coming to the War Office he found the salary had always been but £1,400, until it was raised by Godolphin for St. John a thousand more. For his part he would be satisfied with the old recompense in order to leave the King the difference wherewith to gratify whom he would. His Majesty said he had found few like him, and would let it be as he proposed.[1]

Beset by the importunities of the crowd who jostled one another for promotion, the new Sovereign enjoyed one hour of respite in the audience given to the Primate. He said "he liked him better than all the rest who came to tender homage, for he was the only one who asked for nothing." Returning to Lambeth, Tenison believed that his long day of public life was passed, and that he might fairly hope to be suffered to wait his end in peace. But the influence and respect he universally enjoyed were of too much value to be left out of political calculation; and with the King's approval a place was offered him in the Council of Ministers. Nottingham and Cowper cordially advocated the proposal, as likely to form the best guarantee that no designs were harboured inimical to the Church, and that no fresh attempts would be made to abridge the liberties of Non-conformists. Tenison, far from desiring such an additional distinction, could not easily be persuaded to incur the new responsibility it involved. He alleged, with truth, his increasing infirmities of body and anxieties of mind as pleas in bar against the dignity proposed; and he could only be induced to yield to the argument sincerely used by the Lord President and the Chancellor, that the support of the Church was an element *sine quâ non* in the peaceful establishment of Constitutional rule. From private memoranda of Townshend we learn that the noble-hearted old man did not elude the duty thus laid upon

[1] G. Wentworth, 1st Oct., 1714.

him ; and that during the subsequent twelve months he attended constantly the confidential meetings at Whitehall.

Before the King's arrival in England, the ground-plan of future Government in his name was complete, and Townshend was authorised to submit on bended knee the terms of capitulation, whereby he was to wear the Crown, and his self-appointed Ministers were to keep the Sceptre. The first Cabinet consisted of:—

TENISON	*Archbishop of Canterbury*
MARLBOROUGH	*Captain-General*
COWPER	*Lord Chancellor*
NOTTINGHAM	*Lord President*
WHARTON	*Privy Seal*
SUNDERLAND	*Lord Lieutenant of Ireland*
TOWNSHEND } STANHOPE }	*Secretaries of State*
MONTROSE	*Secretary for Scotland*
HALIFAX	*First Lord of the Treasury*
ORFORD	*First Lord of the Admiralty*
ONSLOW	*Chancellor of the Exchequer*
SHREWSBURY	*Chamberlain*
DEVONSHIRE	*Lord Steward*
SOMERSET	*Master of the Horse*
SOMERS	(Without office)

And when it was agreed as to the places to be taken respectively by the future rulers of England, George I. was made to understand their decision. All the reasons, or the half of them, would have been, by letter or in broken English, beyond his comprehension, and the effort would, doubtless, have ineffably bored him. But he had shrewdness enough to see that his acquiescence was all that was necessary, not his pretended or imaginary approval. On any other terms than the combined will of those who wanted him for King, he knew that he had better not quit the Hunting Lodge where he had passed the noon of life. But the offices of Government being settled as an indispensable preliminary, he understood that in all the forms and ceremonies of Royalty he was to be treated as King. The Court pageantry and Executive forms of Monarchy were indispensable to the new system of rule. The dread of another Commonwealth, by courtiers scornfully disclaimed, and by statesmen seldom actually

owned, was to be lulled to rest by the show and state of Royalty; and for the sake of it the haughtiest and wealthiest, the dullest and the wisest aspirant to Cabinet rank were content to keep up scrupulously the litany of Right Divine. Government by way of Kingcraft was over, but the part of Kingship could no more be left out than that of Hamlet's father in the play. Majesty should have honour, love, obedience, troops of friends, Parks, Palaces, Guards, the right to give and withhold titles, and a Civil List of £700,000 a year. How much all this practically amounted to, as consideration for coming into exile, he did not exactly know, and his Ministers did not care too precisely to explain. But on one point they were resolved, namely, that they would meet and deliberate with closed doors, and under the mutual pledge of secrecy, hitherto imperfectly kept as Privy Councillors, but henceforth a bond indispensable to the preservation of the new system. Where was this covenant recorded or written? Where is it recorded or written now? Like other momentous and memorable things, it can only be read between the lines, or not believed at all.

On the King's landing at Greenwich, he was received by the Lords Justices and a crowd of notabilities of either party, and afterwards gave audience to those who had been most zealous in his interest. Ormond, Harcourt, and Bolingbroke were not of the number, and Orford, who arrived early the next morning, had to be content with kissing his Majesty's hand.

At the first levée Marlborough was received with especial attention, the Prince of Wales reminding him of his having served under him at Oudenard. The veteran courtier, after two years' exile, could not be insensible to the fragrance of such flattery. Both the King and his son were said to have made themselves very obliging to those about them; paying visits to several of the older nobility, and going to sup and play cards with others. The Duke was said to have made an offer to the Prince of Marlborough House as a suitable residence, which might easily be connected by a gallery with St. James's; but, if ever made, its acceptance was certain to have been objected to by colleagues in whom the fear probably still lingered of the old ascendency.

At the first meeting of the new Privy Council, George I.

allowed a declaration to be made in his name promising to support the Established Church "without impairing the toleration allowed by law to Protestant Dissenters, so agreeable to Christian charity." Though no one could tell precisely how much or how little the words thus ascribed to Royalty might mean in the shape of legislative change, they were taken as an augury of more tolerant times to come; and addresses of congratulation and gratitude were presented by a hundred ministers, introduced by the Duke of Devonshire to the King, and by the Duke of Argyll to the Prince of Wales. All of them wearing the Genevan gown, a waggish courtier was heard to ask if the ceremony was a funeral. "No, my lord," said Bradbury, "a resurrection."

The Duke of Buckingham, in a protracted audience, strove to convince George I. that he had been greatly misinformed regarding the relative strength of parties, and undertook to show that the Whigs were but a handful compared with the friends of the Church. His Majesty listened, and his Grace came out highly pleased with himself. An hour or two later he was informed that his services were no longer required.

One of the Chancellor's first duties was to frame what he called an Impartial History of Parties for the new Sovereign, with the view of convincing him that his safety lay in the ascendency of the Whigs. In numbers, wealth, and social influence, Cowper admitted them to be so equal that it was necessary a decided preference should be marked by patronage under Court favour before the next elections, in order to secure the Government a working majority. Lady Cowper translated the paper into French, and it was given to Bernsdorff for the edification of his master. The programme thus framed was generally followed; waverers trimmed their sails to catch the changing wind; and the new Parliament was thought safe to contain a decided preponderance of Ministerialists. Among other acts of Executive power resorted to in the first days of the new reign was the removal of certain of the Judges, whose private feelings inclined, it was said, to Jacobitism, though no impeachment of partiality in the discharge of their office lay against them. The same had been done on the accession of William. In the Act of Settlement the Judges were treated as holding their seats during the life of the Monarch in whose name their commissions ran.

The first meeting of the Cabinet was at the Cockpit, part of the old Palace at Whitehall, from a window in which Pembroke saw Charles I. walk from St. James's to the scaffold. Originally designed for the enjoyment by the Court of the amusement which the name denotes, the building occupied the space on which the Privy Council Office stands, and was connected by a gallery with the Palace, on the west bank of the Thames. In the time of Queen Anne, it ceased to be used for the cruel sport which continued to be practised elsewhere; and the arena was converted into a Court for the hearing of Appeals.[1] One of the larger rooms had from the time of the Revolution been used for conferences by the Ministerial heads of departments, and when they associated themselves together as a Cabinet, it continued to be their ordinary place of meeting.

The new Government was resolved on a policy of peace, but Stanhope, whose ear was rather too sensitive to foreign fears and whose voice was too sympathetically tuned to military airs, suggested when on his way to Vienna, that a combined Dutch and English fleet should be kept in the Mediterranean, to guarantee the Emperor's dominions in Italy, and thereby liberate his undivided force for the defence of the Low Countries.[2] But the Cabinet forbade his holding out any hope of the kind. Such an engagement could not be entered into without the consent of the States, where there were no secrets in foreign policy, and, as soon as it was known, it would be looked upon here as a direct step towards embroiling the country afresh in a European war. Thus controlled, the elastic and inventive Foreign Secretary turned to a closer alliance with France, which he contributed greatly to bring to completion.

Bolingbroke, though mortified at the manner of his dismissal, attended the Coronation with most of the Tory Peers, and public acquiescence in the new order of things may be said to have been complete. The Pretender, hastening to Versailles to ask aid for the recovery of the Crown, was told in firm though friendly terms that France could not move; and that he must not remain within her confines. His Manifesto from Plombières asserting his hereditary right to the Throne excused his abstention while his sister lived, by the assurances he had had in her latter days of her goodwill towards him.

[1] Chief Justice Tindal to his niece, Mrs. West.

[2] Townshend to Stanhope, 26 Oct., 1714.—*MS.*

CHAPTER II.

HIGHLAND INSURRECTION.

1715.

Differences in Cabinet—Judges Irremovable—General Election—No King's English—Court Jobbing—Deaths of Wharton and Halifax—Committee of Impeachments—Flight of Bolingbroke and Ormond—Retirement of Shrewsbury—Sunderland Privy Seal—Mar at Levée—Pulteney and Walpole—Pretender at Edinburgh—Argyll's Humanity Censured—Trial and Execution of Rebel Lords—Penal Laws—Septennial Act.

THE Cabinet had not been three months in existence before symptoms of disunion began to appear. Marlborough on his return in triumph had harboured no doubt that, *l'homme inevitable*, he would again be Administrative King. Stanhope and Townshend might make excellent Secretaries; Halifax an unexceptionable financier; and Cowper once more the best occupant of the Woolsack. Indecorous Wharton might have the Privy Seal, and Shrewsbury the Chamberlain's Staff, while he, as of yore, would be supreme, Master of the Ordnance and Captain-General of all the land forces of the realm, with Sunderland for Lieutenant of Ireland, and his other sons-in-law well placed at the Court. This would have been enough for any other man garnished with the respect and confidence of those around him. But for Marlborough it was, without that garnish, enough only to keep alive the fever of tantalisation if the sense of power and the gain of patronage were wanting. His quick sensibility was not long in perceiving that Royalty had no confidence in him; that his colleagues while acrimoniously observant of the respect due to his pre-eminence, experience, influence, and fame, were reticent and measured in their intercourse with him; that his wife was

regarded as one whom it was difficult to please, impossible to trust, and perilous to offend; and that, with daily recurring rumours of a disputed succession, he was not to be allowed to have at his disposal commissions in the Army. The most accomplished dissembler of his time was not likely to indulge in the luxury of resentful words that would betray to outsiders the unreality of his position; but now and then he gave way to his vexation, bidding the applicants for his favour to try Pulteney or some other quarter where they might gain their ends, as he had not the giving of a Lieutenancy or a Cornetcy of Horse. It had been well for his reputation had Sarah suffered his discontent to ripple away in murmurs of this kind. A letter of Bolingbroke asserts that during the summer of 1715 the Duke reopened communications secretly with the Pretender, sending the exiled Court £20,000.[1] Was this a premonitory symptom of the want of self-control that not long after showed itself in so many unexpected ways? Or was it an impulse of compunction or compassion yielded to without the advice or cognisance of any whom he was used to trust? There is no evidence that, however meant, it was followed up by any act of falsity to the newly-established order of things; and those who are not ashamed to own unwillingness to believe in the double dealing of illustrious men find it easier to question than explain the allegation.

One of the best practical reforms made by the new Government was that for increasing the salaries of the Judges and recognising their claim to continuance on the Bench during good behaviour. During the *régime* of Prerogative they were made frequently without pretence of merit, and unmade when unmindful of the whim or interest of the Court, without scruple or shame. William and Anne had justly earned popularity by waiving in most cases the right, never questioned in their predecessors, of treating the commissions of the Common Law Judges, as that of the Lord Keeper, as cancelled by the demise of the Crown. A few new appointments made by them were precedents that would have justified similar changes by George I.

Elizabeth, despotic as she was in many other ways of rule, had let her prerogative sleep in this respect; and how often and

[1] Bolingbroke to James III., 25 September, 1715.—*Stuart Papers.*

how grievously it had been exercised by her successors was painfully held in remembrance. The power of deprival had been foregone by Cromwell and, for a time, by Charles II., until Chief Justice Raymond refused to overrule by authority of the King's Bench the right of the House of Lords to commit one of its Members for contempt.[1] This was an offence not to be endured, and he was thrust aside to make room for the infamous Scroggs. He in his turn was deposed for Pemberton, who was driven back to the Bar in time to defend the seven Bishops. The precedents thus set anew of deprival without public cause were too convenient to be readily laid aside, and one of the culminating misdeeds of James was the supersession of the Judges who declined to endorse his suspension of Statute law.

It was plain enough that if the head and front of the delinquent King's offending was to be put an end to, the independence of the Judges must be secured. New patents might be requisite at the commencement of each reign to confer authority on those who were to administer the law in the Sovereign's name, and a reasonable discretion in pensioning off aged or feeble public servants, and putting more efficient men in their stead, was not questioned. Some changes were made without petulant cavil, but it was confidently expected that the principle of irremovability, save for grave and grievous cause, would be not merely observed, but treated as beyond contention.

The Judges then held by no other tenure than that of *quam diu se bene gesserint*, and Ministers did not think of abridging the prerogative of removal and fresh appointment at the beginning of each reign. No complaint of judicial partiality or error prevailed that would have justified a sweeping change on the accession of Anne; but to re-assert and maintain the power, it was resolved to depose two of the Common Law Judges and the Chief Justice of Chester. Nottingham, then Secretary of State, apprised the Lord Keeper "that though the Queen had not resolved upon the persons to succeed Mr. Justice Turton and Baron Hatsell, yet she was determined that their patents should not be renewed; and that it would, perhaps, even in their own opinion, be more decent that they

[1] Lord Campbell's "Lives of the Chief Justices," II., 8.

'should not again appear on any Bench."[1] Both were learned, upright, and assiduous men, against whom no other imputation lay but that of being Whigs appointed by the late King. Hatsell's name was remembered as having been the Judge of Assize who tried at Hertford the remarkable accusation brought against Spencer Cowper of having caused the death of the beautiful Quakeress with whom he was in love; and having, by his judicial discrimination of the evidence, led to a just but hardly expected acquittal. On the summons of Lord Keeper Wright, both silently withdrew, and no attempt was subsequently made to reinstate or compensate them.[2] To the Attorney-General the Secretary wrote: "The Queen would have you inform yourself of the nature of Sir Joseph Jekyll's patent for the Chief Justiceship of Chester, whether it be for life or *quam diu*, and determinable as those of the Judges at Westminster. This might be done without sending for his patent or making it public."[3] Jekyll was not, however, to be drawn into admitting any lapse of title or wheedled into making *profert* of his patent, and sooner than provoke an invidious discussion in the House of Commons, where Jekyll's wit, eloquence, and candour made him a favourite, Northey advised that it would be better to let the Member for Eye alone.

The Cabinet, led by Cowper, wisely counselled great forbearance; and a Bill introduced by him, with the consent of George I., altered in a sense the most beneficial, the tenure of Judicial office. Something more, however, was wanting to establish their independence in the estimation of the people. Under the old system, nominal salaries were small and the fees exacted from suitors varied capriciously and were oftentimes oppressive to the humbler sort, while the suspicion was kept alive (not without cause) that presents often furtively offered had their weight in the doubtful scale. As the first step towards raising the reputation of civil and criminal justice, it was proposed that the annual pay of the Judges from the Civil List should be substantially increased, that of the Chief Justices being raised to two thousand a year.

The absorbing thought which necessarily filled each mind was,

[1] Nottingham Correspondence, 3 June, 1702.—*MSS.*

[2] Fosse, "Judges of England."

[3] Nottingham *MSS.*, 18 May, 1702.

what was to be done with Parliament. By Statute[1] a dissolution was imperative within six months of the commencement of the reign. In the absence of Stanhope, his colleagues deferred as long as possible complying with the obligation. They had distributed amongst them the keys of Executive rule, but who could tell how they would fit the curiously varied wards of National opinion? A Cabinet was a new contrivance, of whose working no one could feel sure. If the experiment proved successful, it might, and it was hoped it would, combine and control all other influences in the State; but the motive power of the political machine still lay in the action of the constituency. Of a majority in the Upper House the Ministry felt secure; but it took all their individual and collective skill to provide not merely the official seats they wanted at Westminster, but to secure the return of a sufficient number of grateful or expectant friends on whom they could rely.

Out of 513 English seats 371 were nominated by noble and wealthy proprietors, speculative purchasers, or by the Treasury for the time being. In Scotland nearly the whole of the forty-five seats were filled in this way. In Ireland the sixty-four County Members and the representatives of half-a-dozen cities and towns, might be called elective; but two-thirds of the Irish Parliament were nominees of landed proprietors and their assigns for valuable consideration. Great families in England were accustomed to dictate in their respective counties whether the old knights of the shire should be sent again to St. Stephen's, or whether promising substitutes for those who had proved indolent or inefficient should be taken from the rising generation. A few territorial magnates had learned of late to boast that they had what was called the representation of certain small towns or decayed hamlets in their pockets. The accuracy of such vauntings signified comparatively little theretofore; but it now became a matter of collective anxiety. For the first time the business of Government had been undertaken by the promoters of a syndicate, who named themselves directors, with the power of filling vacancies by co-optation; and the contributive share of Parliamentary support which each could bring or guarantee became a matter of paramount importance to all the other members of the company. It does not appear that they always

[1] 7th and 8th William, ch. 15, and 6th Anne, ch. 7.

possessed the seats they required in the Lower House; and Marlborough, Halifax, and Sunderland had to rely on deft electioneering hands like Wharton and Walpole to make provision for several of their followers who had rendered the party service by tongue or pen, but who had no chance by themselves to break into St. Stephen's merely by force of talents or merit. Christmas had come and gone, and the time appointed by the Statute had almost run out before the Cabinet could bring themselves to plunge into the electoral deep; nor was it until Stanhope reappeared amongst them that the actual decision was taken, on the result of which it was plain that their continuance in office must depend. The country was full of Jacobite doubts and dissenting fears. The old loyalty had perished, and there was no immediate prospect that praise of the new loyalty would go for much at the polls; and if not what would determine the issue? But the Statute was inexorable, and accordingly a new Parliament was summoned for the 17th of March.

Party heats prevailed in the chief towns and several of the counties, but on the whole the supporters of Government had a considerable majority. The electors of the City published a mandate to their members directing them to inquire rigorously into the conduct of the late Ministry, who had advised the peace of Utrecht, throwing away, they said, the fruits so dearly bought of a long and exhausting war.

Horace Walpole, who for a time acted as private secretary to Townshend, and was sent as envoy to the Hague, where his shrewdness in the discrimination of character and devotion to business rendered him of especial use as a correspondent, congratulated Government on their success in the elections.[1]

Old Craggs stood for Newport and was defeated by Mr. Stephens, a gentleman of local influence; Marlborough promised to ask for him a seat from his young relative, the head of the Pelhams, and Craggs himself besought Townshend to back his suit. "If his Lordship would not have compassion on him he must give up all hopes of serving his King and country. If Stanhope succeeded at Cockermouth, there would be a vacancy at Aldborough, and Craggs gave his poor soul to the devil if he would not rather owe his seat in Parliament to the Earl than

[1] To Townshend, 15 March, 1715.—*MS.*

to any man in England."[1] Outsiders inconsiderately asked what would the new Parliament do? As well might they ask the instruments of the Guards band what tune they meant to play. To keep order and spirit on the march, their music no doubt was essential; but what music? That must be settled overnight by those who did not take an ostensible part in determining the tune. Whatever might have been the case in past times, the Cabinet would thenceforth select the airs from day to day, without punctilious care of what had gone before, the memory whereof in the national ear was likely to be soon forgotten. Spontaneous movements, sometimes full of passion, and occasionally the efforts of erratic genius, occur in Parliamentary history; but in the main the narration is tolerably consecutive, and is called in contemporary Memoirs, "doing the King's business," which really meant doing the business of his Ministers, sometimes to his satisfaction, very often to his discontent, but hardly ever at his suggestion. The managers within the closed doors of the Cockpit decided what should be performed during the season, and Parliament had few other functions than to play and be paid for the playing. Before they met there were signs that some of the late Government, and not a few of their supporters were not irreconcilable. Bolingbroke, though disappointed and slighted, had not quite made up his mind what course to take. He had lived on friendly terms with Cadogan and Stanhope; and he believed that a peerage conferred on his father, who was not a party man, and was qualified by the old estate of Battersea, would pass with the world as the easiest form of amnesty to himself. He wrote to his successor in office, begging an interview: "That I may do joy better at this time, it will be of use that I have the opportunity of speaking to you. I am now ready and will wait upon you wherever you command; and I shall not take two minutes of your time."[2] The General was advised to refuse; and Bothmar's intervention was enlisted to obtain an audience of the King. Cowper, having a good many other things to object to, is said to have urged Bernsdorff to prevent the issue of the patent; but a promise had already been obtained by the most corrupt of the Court brokers, of whom Townshend said that he had every day some project or

[1] Townshend to Lord Clare (created Duke of Newcastle), 1 Feb., 1715.—*MS.*

[2] To Secretary Stanhope, 10 March, 1715.—*MS.*

'other on foot to get money. The Chancellor was more successful in preventing Colonel Burgess, a companion of Stanhope, a man of depraved manners and morals, being sent as Governor to Massachusetts, whose Puritan folk "would look at it as being a judgment upon them." His patron in office would not give way; and he was bought off for £1,000 in ready money through a colonial agent then in London; Samuel Shute being named in his stead.

Chancellor Bernsdorff and Count Bothmar had cherished hopes of profit and dignity in England, such as Bentinck and Keppel had enjoyed under William; and they were disappointed and disgusted when it was proved to them that the Act of Succession had interposed impassable barriers in the way of their ambition. There was nothing for it but to try how far they could dispose of their influence to others; and this they appear to have done, without respect of persons, to the highest bidder. The Baroness Kilmanseck and the Countess of Platen, who formed prominent parts of the Honoverian household, vied with each other in the exercise of clandestine aids to patronage, and drove in that way a subordinate but substantial trade. The statutable limitations, moreover, were hardly thought to apply to them; and in due time they were ennobled. Mr. Chetwynd was said to have obtained the lucrative post at the Board of Trade which he kept for many years through Madame Kilmanseck, to whom he gave £500 and a pair of diamond earrings. Robethon obtained a grant in reversion of the Clerkship of the Parliament for whomsoever he might chose to name, and for £1,800 he assigned it to Spencer Cowper, M.P. for Truro, for whose sons in succession the patent made the claim to the office inure.[1]

Meanwhile the giver of titles began to chafe in his gilded cage. How much he was to gain in money by his elevation was not quite clear, and how much he had lost in personal freedom became daily clearer. It took little sagacity to foresee that as his position grew firmer, and he could afford more safely to express his discontent, he would be likely to question the infallibility of Ministerial dictation; and who could tell what difficulties and dangers might thence ensue? The Chancellor undertook to bring George I. into a different frame of mind by specious pretences of popular reverence for king-craft and

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary.

respect for Kings, provided only they would exercise their sway with a counter signature of responsible Ministers, and take the trouble to buy votes as they wanted them. "The generality of the world here," said Cowper, "is so much in love with the advantages a King of Great Britain has to bestow without exceeding the bounds of law, that 'tis in your Majesty's power, by showing your favour in good time to one or other of them, to give which party you please a clear majority in all succeeding Parliaments." We may doubt if the transplanted Elector half understood the Chancellor's theory of limited Monarchy; or if he believed that the keeper of his conscience himself believed in it; and he soon waxed weary of the innumerable restraints and reservations he was told he must observe, and longed for his old freedom at Herrenhausen.

George I. had brought with him from Germany few political ideas. Of tradition and prejudices he had the usual stock that came as heirlooms to the Princes of the Holy Roman Empire; but there was no one to instruct him in the principles of constitutional rule; and he had much to learn on assuming the Chief Magistracy of a free people. The teachers into whose hands he fell were competent enough; and in a theoretic way sufficiently in earnest about acquainting him with what he ought not to do. On one important point he found, however, that most of them were dumb, and the rest inexplicit; for, in truth, they were not among themselves agreed. In the undeft but straightforward sense of his duty, he was bound to requite the call of three nations to be their King by proving in all legimate ways that he meant to be their common Sovereign, and not a grateful dependant merely on an active and thorough-going party. Was not this, however, what the most thoughtfully ambitious of that party sought, and had made up their minds that he ought to be? They were a majority in the Government. The Primate was too old and infirm to take part with either side; Marlborough began to show less interest in political designs; and Cowper, though at heart more National than sectional, sincerely believed that what he had told the King soon after his arrival was true, that the Whig Aristocracy, allied as they were with the Chief men of the City, and the Three Denominations of Dissenters, formed together the indispensable guarantors of his Throne; and that under existing circumstances, at all events, he must

keep them in good humour. Still, at heart he hated the exclusive self-seeking and violence which was never tired of exultation over displaced rivals.

Nottingham, who had consented, not without misgiving, to preside in Council with able men from whom he differed widely on many vital questions, sympathised probably more than they with their illogical Sovereign in his desire to be recognised as head of the whole community. But against the trenchant ribaldry of Wharton, the dogged narrowness of Townshend, and the restless irritability of Sunderland, it was difficult to contend. There still lingered in the fleeting shadows of coalition one of finer perceptions, and truer National feelings, who only lacked the early faith in himself and in the future which had enabled him to play a generous part; but who, having outlived that invaluable quality of a statesman, was now longing only for a peaceful evening after a fitful and troubled day. Shrewsbury might have retained any of the great offices he was allowed simultaneously to hold without the chance of a competitor, but he preferred the Gold Key of Chamberlain as implying the least amount of direct responsibility. He had not sat many weeks in Cabinet without being convinced that, whoever else was in his proper place, he had little business there. His eccentric pride had for five-and-twenty years kept him from being identified with either sect or faction. He disapproved, and in private deprecated, as unwise and unpatriotic, the longings of his colleagues for vengeance, and their growing resolve to use the authority of the Crown to wreak their purpose. He would have no hand in such a work; and an opportunity soon arose which brought matters to a test. There could be no doubt that the recent elections had given a decisive majority to Government in the Commons; and their predominance in the Lords was beyond question. A speech from the Throne was to be put together that would serve at once as a pledge of constitutional rule, a programme of legislative policy, and a rallying cry to the foreign powers that had theretofore stood against the domination of France; for though Louis XIV. still kept up the ceremonials of amity, his refusal to compel the Pretender to quit Lorraine was taken as proof that his neutrality could not long be relied on. Wanting a record of the deliberations in Cabinet when the important document came to be framed, we can only conjecture

the diversities of opinion and phrase that marked the conferences. Like most of the Royal discourses that have since been addressed to both Houses at the beginning of a new Parliament, it bore upon its face palpable traces of contention, and as ultimately read by the Chancellor on the 17th of March—his Majesty being unable to attempt its delivery in the Parliamentary tongue—it said, and unsaid by inference, if not actually in words, a good many things that the audience delighted to hear. When the Keeper of the Great Seal told his brother Peers and the Gentlemen of the Commons standing at the Bar that "it were to be wished that the unparalleled successes of a war which was so wisely and cheerfully supported by the nation had been attended by a suitable conclusion," adding in his Majesty's name a mild expression of regret that "some conditions essential to the security and trade of Great Britain were not yet duly executed, and that the performance of the whole might be looked upon as precarious until they should have formed defensive alliances"; and complaining that the Pretender's continuance in Lorraine, and the assistance he boasted of expecting to repair his former disappointments, rendered impracticable our trade and commerce, which, if not retrieved, must be destroyed, few of his audience out of the Cabinet could have expected to hear him conclude with an announcement that for the liquidation of the war debt and lightening of taxation "a great number of ships had been paid off which had been kept in commission when there was no occasion for continuing such an expense." What would not one give to know in whose handwriting this compensating paragraph originally stood, or how the promoters in the Cabinet of panic kept at a low boil reconciled themselves to taking off the lid of their concoction? The inconsistency was too flagrant to escape notice, and Bolingbroke made his own use of it.

The Duke of Bolton having moved the Address, which pledged the House to restore the National commerce and "recover the reputation of the Kingdom in foreign parts," Bolingbroke objected to the censure thus implied of the conduct of affairs in the late reign, and of all that had been accomplished by The Peace. In a speech of unusual length, he reviewed the foreign policy in which he had borne so great a part, and vindicated, with eloquence surpassing all his former efforts, the

measures and the motives repeatedly applauded by Parliament, but now sought to be condemned. He probably felt that it might be his last opportunity, and he relied, doubtless, on the support of those whom he had so often led. But the Thanes fled from him; and, as he afterwards said, "he saw, to the shame of the Peerage, several concur to condemn, in one general vote, all that they had approved of in a former Parliament." He was supported by Trevor, Buckingham, Anglesey, the Archbishop of York, and the Bishop of Bristol. Shrewsbury, recalling the opposition he had given on the accession of Anne to similar expressions reflecting on the foreign policy of William III., refused to acquiesce in the condemnation of a Government in which he had formed a part. As Ambassador to Paris, he had conveyed the thanks of England to her old enemy for coming to terms at Utrecht, which both declared were concessions to humanity, and which both were prepared to defend as politic and just. How could the Chancellor look him in the face without repudiating the charge that the Speech he had read from the Throne meant to disparage the memory of the late Queen, and to revile her Ministry, or how could he plead the necessity of satisfying the National expectation that a more vigorous foreign policy should characterise the new reign?

Wharton, who had been created a Marquis, died suddenly in April, leaving the Privy Seal an unexpected prize to be contended for. It was not easy to decide who should have it; and, to avoid grudge and grumble, it was resolved to place it in Commission, Under Secretary Southwell, Sir C. Musgrave, and A. Charlton being named as its temporary trustees. Second in political rank to the President of the Council, the Keeper of the Privy Seal must be a man of lineage and wealth, for he had daily show to make beyond the mere parade of the six prancing steeds and coach with emblazoned panels, on days of cavalcade, and the keeping a luxurious table hospitably full. Stanhope and Townshend would, perhaps, have filled up the post at once, but the muttered veto of the Captain-General would not have it so; the reason in due time appeared. Sunderland was growing tired of reading despatches from the Lords Justices in Dublin on subjects he knew little and cared less about, and was discontent at not being as prominent in great affairs as he had been when Secretary of State. But the Marlborough section had

already appropriated so many good and glittering things that wise Sarah recommended him to wait a little longer; and her counsel still prevailed, for Lady Anne still lived and loved him, moody and absorbed as he was, and every ambitious thought of the Duchess was centred in their children. The tribute paid after his death to Wharton's partisan worth was without precedent, and has been without parallel. His only son was still but a youth of eighteen, of whose early promise he had been boastful, and in whose education he had found in later years his chief delight. The Cabinet, in a fit of folly ineffable, desired that the King should make the boy a Duke. Not for his merits, for, as yet, he had none; nor for his fortune, for it was mortgaged to the hilt; but, as they vainly imagined, to pledge, by the pre-gift of the highest honour the Crown had to bestow, his support as a partisan. How they were rewarded by his graceless Grace was seen ere long.

Though the first place at the Treasury had been conceded to Halifax at the outset, Walpole began to covet it for himself. Knowing the nature of the man, Townshend thought he might be piqued into resigning, which would be better, on the whole, than turning him out, and, as Secretary of State, he sent him, accordingly, an order from the King to appoint one of his friends Commissioner of Customs, which was meant for an affront that no First Lord could be expected to endure.[1] Halifax did not immediately resign, and his death soon afterwards caused another and more important vacancy in the Cabinet. The First Lord of the Treasury had contrived to clutch more honours and rewards than fell to the share of most of his contemporaries, yet the close of his career was darkened by disappointment and dimmed by a sense of distrust. Unsatisfied with the Garter, an earldom, and the great patronage of the Treasury, Montagu repined because his jealous colleagues would not agree to his having the post of Lord Treasurer, which they not unreasonably thought more than his deserts, and higher than was compatible with the principles of oligarchic equality they were bent on establishing among themselves. He could not brook the mortification of remembering that Harley and Shrewsbury, with whom he had run the race of glory, should in turn have won the historic staff that had been held by Norfolk and Burleigh, Danby

[1] Newcastle to Devonshire, 12th June, 1741.—*MS.*

and Godolphin. "He had," says one who knew him well, and whose discrimination was almost unerring, "no other principle but his ambition, so that he would put all in distraction rather than not gain his point."[1] His conduct too closely verified this severe judgment. Alone, perhaps, of his party, he had expected the world should be told that he was the head of the new Government, and he could not stifle his chagrin at its being denied. Finding it impossible to shake the resolution of the Cabinet regarding the Lord Treasurership, he was suspected of scheming with the Opposition for their overthrow—and while thus engaged he was himself overthrown by the enemy that walketh in darkness.

Long afterwards, when, in the cool of life, forms and facts of the time gone by were estimated more clearly, old Horace weighed in his grudging balance the character of Halifax as it looked to him. "He was an able speaker and aspiring Minister, insolent in power, and miserable and dejected to the last degree when out of it. It was said that before Queen Anne's death he had condescended to make his court to Lord Orford, and was upon tolerable terms with him, weaning himself from his former intimacy and cordiality with the steady Whigs."[2] What was to be done with the vacant office? The Treasurer's Staff, though broken into five, was not to be allowed to drift out of reach. Lord Carlisle, a Howard, and owner of many green acres in Yorkshire, was, politically speaking, a friendly nonentity; but his son had married Lady Frances Spencer, daughter of Sunderland by his first wife, the heiress of Holles Newcastle. Here was a concatenation of reasons and motives for making Lord Carlisle First Lord of the Treasury. Burnham may not have come to Dunsinane, but Castle Howard, we know from the *Gazette*, was included for a time within the curtilage of the Cockpit, and, to the surprise of its owner, who had done nothing, said nothing, and imagined nothing in his whole life to merit such distinction, he found the doors of the Cabinet flung open to him as Chief Minister of Finance.[3] Harm in that capacity he did none, and, as a *locum tenens* for a brief space, he probably did as well as any other—for no ill is recorded of him.

[1] Private letter of Marlborough to the Duchess, 7th February, 1709.

[2] H. Walpole to Rev. J. Etough, his brother's chaplain, 21st Sept., 1752.—*MS.*

[3] *London Gazette*, 23rd May, 1715.

Parental jealousy would not suffer the Prince of Wales to take any active share in Government. He was said to have been willing, like more than one of those who were destined to succeed him in title and pre-eminence, to go to Ireland as Viceroy, and his enterprising helpmate would doubtless have found ample and useful scope for her varied and noble qualities, had he been permitted to do so. Sunderland did not stand in the way, and, if he thought about the matter at all, he and his statesmanlike mother-in-law must have discerned, without prompting, that the heir to the Throne, fond of hospitality and amusement, with a wife possessing the good sense and good taste fitting her for social rule, might attract the aristocracy and attach the people as no one else could do. Of the Princess we hear comparatively little for some time. She was doubtless making herself acquainted in her own way with the country of her adoption ; and learning to appraise at their actual value those with whom she might one day be called upon to deal. Now and then she was, perhaps, prematurely tempted to talk to her father-in-law about grave matters, or matters that to her looked grave. Leibnitz had taught her to be candid and true in the avowal of opinions until she was convinced they were unsound. George I., who found it hard enough to endure the dogmatic resolutions of the Cabinet he did not always understand, was provoked at her presumption in seeking to meddle in affairs that were none of hers. "*Quel diable cette Princesse la,*" he exclaimed as he came out of the curtained pew in the Chapel Royal, where she had tried to whisper in his ear some unwelcome advice.

The Secret Committee appointed to inquire into the means whereby the Treaty of Utrecht had been brought about, and how far the designs of its authors were faithless to the Hanoverian succession, consisted chiefly of Government partisans, who it was presumed might be trusted to give full weight to the fruits of disloyalty about to be laid before them. From week to week they were occupied in sifting cinder-heaps of official correspondence whereout no sparks of guilt could be elicited; and they then betook themselves to interrogating subordinates as to what their official superiors might have meant, but story, for the most part, they had none to tell. When time went on and no definite hints were dropped of actual discoveries made, the friends of the accused grew sanguine, sarcastic, and at length saucy, till

Shippen laughed openly at the whole proceeding, and said that it would end in smoke. Walpole, on the other hand, persisted in declaring himself unable to find words to describe "the villainy of the late Frenchified Ministry." Oxford remained imperturbable: confident that when all was told nothing worse could be shown to his detriment than agreement in the stipulations of the treaty which the two last Parliaments had declared to be wise and beneficial. He could not be frightened into absconding. Strafford does not seem to have been alarmed; and in a few weeks his share of the business was almost forgotten, and his co-signatory, Bishop Robinson, was not even accused. Bolingbroke, who could not tell how far his secret closetings with the agents of the Stuarts were known, or how many of his plausible and equivocal letters had got into the hands of his enemies, affected to brave the storm, but fled to France the night before he was to have been arrested. Ormond, who loved magnificence, kept open house at Richmond, where the members of the party paid him court as their future leader.

The inveteracy of political persecution pants in the private correspondence of the time. While the preliminary steps were taking in Parliament towards the impeachments, Addison, in a long confidential note, relates with undisguised satisfaction that Ormond was to be impeached on the morrow, and that Bolingbroke was to be indicted for high crimes and misdemeanours, that Prior had been five hours together under seven select members, and being reported very dry in his testimony, a special resolution was made by the Middlesex Magistrates in the hopes to fetch the truth out of him.[1]

In a letter to Townshend, Addison says that he "had great difficulties with himself about Ormond. When he was a member of the University of which his Grace was Chancellor, he was favoured with his countenance and encouragement; and when the Duke succeeded Wharton in Ireland, he resisted many solicitations which were made for the place which Addison had ever since enjoyed in that Kingdom. He would never pardon himself if he gave a vote that might have a tendency to taking his head off, and he had reason to believe Lord Sunderland would condemn him for such a piece of ingratitude. Since he had been in the House he had not once separated from his

[1] To Delafaye. *State Papers.* 16th June, 1715.—*MS.*

friends; and all he proposed to do in this case was to be absent. He desired his Excellency to be acquainted, that it might not make an impression to his disadvantage." Articles of impeachment were brought in against Oxford and Strafford, who were committed to the Tower. The superseded Commander-in-Chief visited his old colleagues in captivity and counselled them to fly while the gates were still ajar. Oxford refused, and defied his accusers to bring him any proofs of treason; while he warned his impulsive visitor not to risk by any precipitate act the forfeiture of his wide domains. Each, however, held to his opinion, and on parting, Oxford exclaimed, "Farewell, Duke without a dukedom," to which his friend replied, "Farewell, Earl without a head." Both prophecies proved untrue. Neither Ormond nor Bolingbroke waited for the impending blow; but, hastening to Paris, offered their services to the Pretender.

Impoverished emigrants, with dreams of restoration, and uncalculating squires at home, who said something decisive should be done, they knew not by whom or how, blamed James III., as they loved to call him under their breath, for indefinitely deferring an invasion. Bolingbroke, as his Secretary of State, and Berwick as his Minister of War, had difficulty in deterring him from hearkening to such instigations. But, as was truly said by the latter, he had neither friend nor ally from whom he could expect effectual help, for Princes seldom trouble themselves about an unfortunate brother unless their particular interests impel them to do so. For twenty years Europe had felt the strain of war, emptying pockets, beggaring husbandry, ruining commerce, and diminishing population. Everybody, therefore, longed to live in peace, and, short of absolute necessity, nothing would tempt any potentate to draw the sword.[1]

Shrewsbury, who sympathised as little with the personal aims as with the personal resentments of his colleagues, felt himself every day more and more in a wrong position. He had no longer any object to gratify by being of the Cabinet, and he despaired of being able to curb the rancour and resentment betrayed by Walpole and Townshend in dealing with their humbled adversaries. From the first he had been one of the minority who would have gladly sanctioned an act of political oblivion. He had not hesitated to take the Seals from Bolingbroke, when

[1] Memoir sent by Bolingbroke to Bar-le-Duc.

it seemed doubtful whether he might not have misused them; but he would have suffered him to remain in England. He now demurred to the measures his colleagues were bent on taking to fortify themselves in exclusive power, and breaking the heart of competition in their discomfited opponents. The temptations of public life for him were over. His scrupulous epicureanism shrank from the coarse, and, as it soon appeared, covetous, ways of the new Court. A King without dignity, and favourites without attractions of form or feature; wearisome iterations of zeal for Protestantism, by men incapable of Christian magnanimity to defeated rivals, might be inevitable, and, upon the whole, preferable to any other *régime;* but that seemed to him no reason why he should actively, or even tacitly, be identified with it. His presence in Cabinet became not less irksome to his colleagues than to himself. Nottingham and Cowper naturally wished him to remain as one to whose sense of right and justice they could always confidently appeal, although there had never been any unreserved intimacy between them; but Sunderland on the one hand and Walpole on the other, would fain have him betake himself to Heythorpe, for he stood equally in the way of their personal ambition.[1] He had never approved of their indiscriminate removal of subordinate officials, against whom no definite charge of unfaithfulness could be brought. He had taken Prior with him to Paris, in 1713, to negotiate the commercial details, for which he was considered peculiarly apt from previous official experience. In 1711 Prior had been appointed by Orford a Commissioner of Customs; he was now deprived, with four other members of the Board, to make room for an equal number of Ministerialists. On the 10th of June Walpole, without Shrewsbury's consent, and without previous notice, moved, as chairman of the Secret Committee, that Prior and Thomas Harley should be taken into custody by the Serjeant-at-Arms. To justify such vindictive rigour, it was thought necessary to keep up apprehensions of conspiracy and invasion, and Townshend recommended Proclamations for the disarming and banishment of all who were of the same faith as the Pretender. Shrewsbury was, in sentiment and judgment, averse throughout life from every form of persecution. He had reluctantly acquiesced in the breach of

[1] Abstract copy by R. Pringle of the Duke of Shrewsbury's letters in State Papers, 20th April, 1715.—*MS.*

the conditions of Limerick and the enactment of the first penal laws under William. With those passed in the time of Anne he had nothing to do, and when in 1712 he consented to become Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he consistently repressed every manifestation of party or sectarian bigotry, and made it clearly understood that he was only there as the representative of the Crown and the guardian of all classes and creeds of the community. It was intimated to him that he had better withdraw from Court, and make way for the Duke of Bolton in his stead. George I. could not be made to understand the reason for a change he viewed with great reluctance. He believed that he owed more to Shrewsbury than to most other men in the Kingdom, and in spite of his strange career in party oscillation his intensely feudal prejudices led him to prefer the head of the house of Talbot as the Marshal of his Court to any of the other nobles that coveted the position. For several days there was a struggle, ending on the 7th of July in the Duke's giving up and retiring into the country. Bolton was named his successor, but not being able to endure the undisguised repugnance of the King, in a few weeks he asked permission to resign. The Cabinet resented silently the treatment of their nominee, declined to name anyone in his place, and the office remained vacant for nearly two years.[1]

Oxford University believed in the legitimacy of the Pretender, and replaced Ormond as Chancellor by his own brother Lord Arran. The wrongs done to Magdalen College were not forgotten; but the health of the exiled Prince was drunk in Chambers every day. Nor can it be doubted that at this time and long after, a great number of the clergy had scruples about the Hanoverian Settlement; and at heart would have preferred the restoration of the hereditary line. They sincerely discredited the fears professed by Government for the stability of the Church. They knew that James the Second's son was a Catholic; but they also knew that the bulk of the English people adhered to the reformed creed, and that were he on the Throne, he would possess still less power than his father had shown, to bend the nation to his will. On the other hand they could not look without misgivings on the manner in which ecclesiastical patronage was likely to be used under the new order of things; and their

[1] Duchess of Marlborough to Mr. Jennings, 8th July, 1715.

apprehensions were not without cause. Amid loud talk about Constitutional right and care for the Protestant religion, scoffers and jobbers in power were bent on strengthening their own ascendancy, and upon making merchandise of Church preferment, to enrich their own kindred and following. Rumours multiplied of plots to overturn the Government by confederate non-jurors and Jacobites in town and country. There had been for some weeks disturbances at Manchester, incited by cries for James III., and splutterings of disaffection at Warrington and other places in Lancashire said by the Government organs to "swarm with Jesuits and Priests." On the 29th July three Proclamations were issued for suppressing seditious tumults, for putting the laws [1] in execution against Papists and non-jurors, and commanding all reputed Catholics to depart from London and Westminster and from within ten miles of the same, and to confine themselves to their habitations. Disturbances, however, subsequently spread throughout Warwickshire and Staffordshire, where Dissenting chapels were pulled down, and other violences with difficulty restrained. Several lives were lost in an attack on a meeting-house at Bromwich. Townshend wrote to Slingsland that they were more and more confirmed in opinion of the Pretender's design to invade the Kingdom; and Parliament was entirely taken up in making preparations for the security and defence of the realm. Several arrests on suspicion were made; but in the Capital no proofs were found of organised disaffection.

Townshend had doubtless made the most of his connection with the family of Pelham, and he now used his position to requite the benefit conferred. Lord Clare was hardly of age, and held out no false lights of intellect or capacity to come; but he was a young man having great possessions, whereunto many seats at St. Stephen's appertained; and it took few visits to the fountain of honour to convert the Earldom of Clare into a revived Dukedom of Newcastle. Out of health or out of humour, Sunderland lingered throughout the summer at Althorpe, and leaving the routine of Irish affairs to Addison, occupied himself with objections to the measures of his colleagues, whose policy he did not profess to understand. Townshend and Walpole did

[1] 3rd of James I. against Popish recusants, and 1st of William and Mary for discovering and removing Papists from London and Westminster.

not hide their vexation at his behaviour, which they attributed to incitement from Marlborough House, where the Duchess, piqued at the want of what she deemed due attention by newly-made Royalty, indulged at the expense of its surroundings in every caprice of sarcasm. She had been an essential part of the greatest Administration England had ever known, and she did not see why she might not be so again. She had made Sunderland Secretary of State nine years before, and she would listen to no vague or evasive excuses for his not being so once more. "Her neighbour George" did not like her; and by what contrivance and concatenation of influences she ultimately achieved her purpose her voluminous memoirs do not explain; but the cuckoo clock of official history in the dead silence of September chimed Sunderland's appointment as Lord Privy Seal, and he continued to hold the viceregal office for some time longer. The young Duke of Grafton was sent to Ireland to act with Lord Galway, and as one of the Lords Justices there he exercised the viceregal functions for the residue of his Excellency's term of office. What fitness he possessed in local knowledge, official experience, or the gift of genius to revive the spirit of industry that in the two last reigns had well nigh been extinguished, nobody could tell. Archbishop King, one of the ablest and most earnest friends the Whigs had in Ireland, expressed strongly his feeling that "They were very unfortunate in their frequent change of Governors, for before they were well acquainted with one he was removed and everybody obliged to begin his business anew."

A fresh piece of service was demanded from Addison. Reactionary murmurings tended to dispel the illusion in the mind of the new Sovereign of his universal acceptability to the nation. Few had been less scrupulous in this respect than Addison, and when he had leisure it was thought that his pen might well be applied to an endeavour to win back the popular esteem which it was said the Jacobite press was gradually weaning away. He undertook accordingly the issue twice a week of the *Freeholder*, to which for several months he was the chief contributor. It was, in fact, a series of essays rather than articles on political topics of moment, or personal sketches of prominent personages, generally in a flattering vein. George I. and the Princess of Wales were made the objects of special encomium.

The summer was spent by the Jacobites abroad in futile efforts to persuade the French Government to send an invading army into Scotland, where they promised that more than half the population would rise in arms to sustain them. Marshal Berwick, whose account is by far the most truthful and intelligible of the time, never believed in these sanguine representations, and steadfastly refused to deceive Louis XIV., who admitted him constantly to audience. Bolingbroke's sagacity prompted him to take a similar part, for which he was denounced by fanatics as a recreant and double-dealer. On the first of September the *Grand Monarque* passed away, and the direction of affairs devolved on the Duke of Orleans, who, "with one virtue and a thousand crimes," steadily refused to commit his exhausted country to the perils and privations of a dynastic war.

A year had passed and an expectant crowd came to felicitate King George on his undisturbed possession of the Throne, Mar, among the rest, placid and plausible, ready to depart on the morrow for the Highlands as if intent on enjoying the autumn in unpolitical pursuits. Scotland was spoken of as sound to the core; though north of the Tay many of the old families remained unreconciled to the system of rule founded in England at the Revolution, and confirmed by the legislative Union. The wild clans of the North had not forsaken the faith of Rome or the traditions of the old dynasty. Bred to endure the rigour of climate, scantiness of fare, want of money, or the means of making it, and all the pains of incessant conflict among themselves, they were too easily liable to be moved by any daring chieftain who might speculate on the advantages of making himself troublesome. Argyll, Montrose, Seaforth, and a good many more rose above such temptations, and undertook, from time to time, to keep their people still; and south of the Clyde there was a growing disposition grumblingly to accept the inevitable, and make the best of incorporation with the richer realm. But so little had been done by Government in the first seven years of Union to realise a parity of conditions; so few Scotchmen of *auld bluid* had been admitted even as junior partners in the joint concern of British rule, that several who submitted to Anne as the lineal descendant of Kings all crowned at Scone, began to talk of the bad bargain and to laugh at the wee German Lairdie from over the water who was now called King. Poli-

ticians who had helped to make the compact openly talked of its repeal.

The malt tax levied in England during the war was exacted in Scotland likewise since the peace: ominous presage, it was said, of heavier burthens still. Seafield summed up the National grievances in a disruptive speech, and advised a combination of parties for the recovery of legislative independence. He was seconded by Mar, who had been commissioner for the making of the Union, and on its completion had exchanged the office of Chief Secretary for the Keepership of the Signet of Scotland. He supported Oxford till he fell, and then was ready, with compliment and complaisance, to enter into the views of his successor. He signed the Proclamation of George I., and wrote a letter before his coming over, prognosticating perfect peace.[1] He was superseded in office, but he was not a man to be silently suppressed.

As opportunity served, he communicated in cypher with Bar-le-Duc, whence, late in July, he had peremptory orders to hie without loss of time to Braemar, summon his own and the neighbouring clans, and raise the flag of revolt. The rash missive was sent without the knowledge of Berwick or Bolingbroke, and without the cognisance of the Regent, all of whom disapproved and would fain have had it recalled; but it was too late: and Mar obeyed.

"A man may possess much intelligence, plenty of personal courage, be a capable Minister, and yet lack the faculties befitting a venture of this nature. In Mar these faculties were wanting. After drawing the sword, he knew not how to use it; and thus," in the words of Berwick, "was frittered away the most favourable opportunity (for the Stuart cause) that had occurred since the Revolution of 1688."

On the morning of the prorogation, Stanhope brought down a message demanding the committal of six Members of the House suspected of connivance at the rising in Scotland, and the motion was agreed to without discussion. Wyndham was absent in Somersetshire and eluded his captors for some days; but surrendered at the house of a relative in town. Cowper objected in Cabinet to the proceedings against him; his father-

[1] 30th August, 1714. Steele republished the letter in 1715, with amusing reflections on the vanity of political pledges and the demoralising effects of civil war.

in-law, at a meeting of the Privy Council, where the King was present, offered himself as bail for his loyal demeanour. Townshend peremptorily objected, and Wyndham was committed to the Tower. Somerset, incensed at his security being declined, broke out in violent terms of denunciation. George I. warmly thanked Townshend for the service he had done him, and dismissed the Duke from the Mastership of the Horse.

The great war over, the first peace-offering of Ministers to the natural desire for economy was the estimate for the year 1713 of eight thousand men as sufficient "for guards and garrisons in Great Britain."[1] Had peace continued there would have been no excuse for abandoning this normal figure. But the total number of men under arms was not defined; and by the time Halifax took charge of the finances of the new Government they had reached fourteen thousand for home service. In the new reign the Cabinet resolved to ask Parliament for an additional four thousand in Great Britain; the immediate reason assigned being the need of extra guards for the protection of the King's person.[2] The system of taking foreign soldiery into pay to serve only abroad was adopted to evade the dislike, amounting often to hostility, to enlistment which was shown by various classes of the community, and the prevalence of which alone was held to justify habitual recourse to impressment for the Navy. Attempts to reduce this supplemental addition to the Army were repeated in the House of Lords, but without success.[3]

Government had in Great Britain but a few thousand disciplined men to repress disorder. Every manifestation of discontent was interpreted as expressive of sympathy in the Northern outbreak and treated as additional proof of spreading plots. But nowhere did the great body of the people evince any disposition to rally to the Pretender, and even in Scotland, after Mar's adherents had been many weeks in possession of Perth and Aberdeen, few recruits joined them from the Lowlands, and their difficulties for want of money and ammunition were at all times very great. On the other hand, comparatively few persons of wealth or influence answered to the call of the Government to arm in its defence. Parliament adopted loyal addresses, granted

[1] Mutiny Act of 1713.
[2] Com. Journ.
[3] See Clode's "History of the Forces of the Crown."

a vote on account to meet any exigency, and suspended the writ of Habeas Corpus. Ormond reluctantly consented to undertake a landing in Devonshire, where his sanguine correspondents promised enthusiastic support. But when, after various delays and mischances, he made his appearance in the West, he found neither preparations nor partisans, and he re-embarked without effecting anything. The arrest of a few distinguished persons effectually discouraged the malcontent gentry, and the people would not stir. In Lancashire and Northumberland, Lords Derwentwater, Widrington, and Nithsdale attempted to raise insurrectionary levies, but with little success. Though Catholics, they yielded precedency to a gentleman named Forster, a staunch Protestant, who was High Sheriff of his county. South of Trent the newspapers had nothing graver to record than the execution at Tyburn of three unhappy wretches convicted of having enlisted in the rebel cause.

Cowper went out of town and his colleagues held on their way. Stanhope and Townshend could not help being affected by the equanimity of Marlborough House amid rumours of spreading disaffection in Lancashire and Northumberland, and tidings of a doubtful fight between the Scottish friends and foes of the Pretender. On the 1st of October, the Duchess wrote: "I don't find that the news from Scotland is so bad as some reported, and I am apt to believe the Duke of Argyll exaggerated the matter a good deal, for at the same time that a very terrible tale came from his Grace, I saw a letter from the Postmaster of Scotland, which said our enemies there were not about two thousand six hundred."[1]

The bland and patient bearing of Lord Carlisle, and his unquestionable reputation for integrity, rendered him acceptable in tranquil times. But when the sky grew overcast and the days began to shorten, his placid features and mild voice were neglected, and men's eyes turned anxiously to a stouter, if not a rougher hand. Ten of the Cabinet were Peers, and it was felt to be desirable that the Government should be represented by more than one of the great officers of State in the Lower House. Pulteney and Walpole had pre-eminent claims to Cabinet rank and legislative dignity. Up to this time the former had been, or

[1] To Lady Cowper.

seemed to be, contented with the Secretaryship of War; but who shall say what airs without words he hummed as he passed the Cabinet door ajar? That it was intended, or, indeed, that it was possible, he should long be left out had probably never crossed his mind, and if malignity sometimes whispered in his ear, it would hardly have suggested a wrong so incredible; for in point of brilliant ability, scholarly attainments, and proven pluck when tested in party conflict, Pulteney stood as well as any man without great family connections or great landed fortune could stand. The Member for King's Lynn was obviously his only competitor; but hitherto he and Pulteney were friends, if friendship be indeed a reality capable of bearing the strain of rival ambitions. When Walpole was impeached in the former reign, Pulteney stood gallantly by him; and his sanguine temperament did not suffer him to doubt that though they had both been allotted secondary posts at the incoming of the King, they both were destined ere long to be included in the inner circle of power. Did it never occur to him that acknowledged parity of pretensions might be after all the insuperable obstacle to their realisation? But if not, why should not both the first and second seats at the Treasury be vacated, and the Secretary at War as well as the Paymaster-General be summoned to fill them? This, however, was precisely what Walpole was determined should not be done. He knew his power in finance better probably than it was understood by anyone else, and he was resolved to have the credit and influence of it unshared. The public resources from taxation were barely sufficient in times of peace, but if they should be engaged in war abroad, or sedition at home, money on demand would be wanted, and a Finance Minister ought to be sure whence it would be forthcoming. Pulteney's aid would, doubtless, be valuable, but it was not by rhetoric or wit that votes of credit on emergency could be obtained or means found for keeping up the price of stock in spite of bad news. Above all, there was nothing so hazardous or hateful in the mind of Walpole as joint leadership, and the recognising of an equal's right daily to question and to differ. Walpole would be everything at the Treasury or nothing; and Pulteney learned only after it was decided, that he was to be left half way upstairs, while his yoke-fellow in party and in office was called to come up higher in the feast of rule. Still he

did not break with his old friends. Flattering expectations were held out to him, and for another year he continued to discharge the duties of the War Office and to believe that his inclusion in the Cabinet would undoubtedly come. Walpole was certainly not a favourite either of colleagues or the King, but he was the best financier among them; and when George I. was reminded of his rugged bearing and unyielding temper, he replied: "But he is the only one who can make money out of nothing." It was obviously requisite that the department should be represented in the Commons by one who was thoroughly master of details and never puzzled by novel arguments or insinuations in debate. Carlisle was translated from the Treasury to the Tower, of which he was made Constable; and a new Board of Treasury was constituted, consisting of Robert Walpole, Sir W. St. Quintin, Paul Methuen, Lord Finch, and Thomas Newport: Walpole being Chancellor of the Exchequer as well as First Lord.

While autumn sunlight shortened apace, Mar lingered in the Highlands, vainly attempting to bring into something like discipline his irregular bands, but giving time for rally and reinforcement to their outnumbering adversaries; and Argyll was able to keep the insurgent movement in check till winter had fairly set in.

Everywhere in England the Nonconformists rallied to the support of the Government. One of their ministers, named Wood, raised and led a Volunteer corps of four hundred men, well armed, in aid of General Willis, when moving on Preston. Many of them were persons of independent means, and those who were not were maintained by their pastor, while from home, at his own cost—earning the warm thanks of the authorities, and the title from his congregation of General, which, on week-days, he bore until his death.

Subsequent risings in Northumberland and Lancashire, under Sheriff Forster and Lord Derwentwater, did not realise the promises made in their name. The kilted invaders were hospitably welcomed at Penrith and Preston; and if Liverpool was called Hanoverian, Manchester was Jacobite. But the many thousand recruits, squires, and yeomen the leaders were led to expect, failed to come in; and when Generals Willis and Carpenter united their veteran forces, they proved too strong for the

boastful but semi-barbarous crowd, jovially resting in an unwalled town. After a brave resistance, Preston surrendered, and 1,489 men laid down their arms.[1] Some of the captives were executed, great numbers were sent as slaves to the plantations, and the few noblemen and gentlemen of fortune were pinioned together and sent to London to abide their impending fate. The Cabinet breathed freely again—all anxiety was practically at an end; but they waited, curiously, from day to day for tidings from Argyll, as to what had become of Mar. The drawn battle of Sheriffmuir on the same day as the fall of Preston was the last flash of Celtic defiance. Without money or commissariat, a better general might have found it impossible to keep the wild clans together in winter quarters. Sutherland and Lovat went over to the side of the Government; Huntley accepted pardon; and the ruin of the rebel movement, by the end of the year, was complete. The Chevalier, in November, appeared among his disheartened adherents, whose numbers daily dwindled to little more than four thousand, not half of whom were effective; while Argyll, reinforced by the Dutch battalions, held Stirling with more than double that number, well armed and supplied with all the necessaries of a winter campaign.

On the 29th of January, retreat was resolved on, and the weary and desponding Highlanders silently obeyed. There were those who urged Argyll to pursue them through the snow and complete their destruction, but the veteran chief deferred moving from day to day, not venturing to tell the hot-heads of his staff how easily consoled he would be if half the dupes, who were no longer capable of resistance, escaped to their humble homes. When it was necessary to come to a decision, to be reported to Government, he had more than one strategic reason to assign for not risking the lives and limbs of his troops in pursuit through the glens beyond the Tay. He had neither stores of food nor tents, or means of transport for ammunition; and as the bulk of his forces was composed of strangers to the wild country through which they must pass, and unaccustomed to the exposure of an unusually hard winter, they were certain to suffer severely. The fight was over, all doubt was done; why should he repay the fidelity and fortitude of the garrison of Perth by hounding them on to decimate his fugitive countrymen?

[1] 13th Nov., 1715.

In the Cabinet such considerations were regarded as mere trifling, if not something worse. His duty was to make such an example as would maim every muscle and fibre of disaffection for at least a generation. If he had instinctive feelings of pity as a Scotchman, that was his affair; but the Commander-in-chief in North Britain must be above all provincial considerations. The preservation of the Union and of the dynasty required a man of greater political firmness and executive nerve. MacCullum More saw no assertion of his own honour and no additional security of the Crown in carnage of undrilled peasants on the mountain side, or the burning of their huts in remote valleys. He willingly gave time for repentance, and advised Whitehall to authorise him to make terms with the chiefs who had led the ignorant crofters into revolt. But a majority of Ministers did not want it said that a languid and desultory sedition had been suppressed, and that the mad-cap enterprise of the Pretender had come to naught; but that a formidable rebellion had been put down, and such retribution inflicted on the partisans of the exiled dynasty as would deter them from like attempts, and the French Court from inciting them in future. They wanted a butcher's bill, and because Argyll would not engage to furnish it, he was dismissed from his command and Cadogan was sent to supersede him. They called on the Prince of Wales to remove the Duke from his post as chief of his household. The Prince took his part in the controversy. His refusal formed an additional subject of irritation with his father, and their differences became widely known. The credulous Celts were left to their fate; and Mar was fain to seek refuge beyond sea. Retributive justice remained to be dealt out to everyone of note who had shown any sympathy with insurrection, though things would be easier in all respects with the Government than they had theretofore been. There was still a minority who disapproved of the undiscriminating policy of retribution, and neither Sunderland, Devonshire, Nottingham, nor the Primate took part in stimulating measures of vengeance.

The Chancellor differed from the majority of his colleagues regarding Scotch affairs. From the first outbreak he had urged strongly the sending of reinforcements to Argyll sufficient to enable him to stamp out disorder, that could only end, as he foresaw, in unavailing misery and loss of life. He was over-

ruled by Marlborough, who personally distrusted Argyll. When the crazy venture of Mar had evidently failed, Cowper's remonstrances were directed against what Townshend and Walpole insisted on as an exemplary policy of vengeance; but the fact that Lady Cowper was a near relative of Sheriff Forster, and known to be the private friend of his misguided comrades of rank, weakened inevitably his pleading for lenity. For a time he took little part and gave out, perhaps persuaded himself, that he was ill. Bernsdorff, who was the mouthpiece of his Majesty's humour, sharply took him and his wife to task for leaning too much towards the Prince, of whom increasing jealousy was manifested in the Royal mind. The Chancellor was with difficulty dissuaded from giving up. The Heir Apparent took occasion on his birthday to send him assurances of his friendship and of his resolve to back him to the utmost of his power if he would retain office, adding that when he came to be King "all things should go to his mind."[1] When Parliament met in January the King was advised to express regret that "the first years of his reign, the whole course of which he wished to have transmitted to posterity distinguished by endearing marks of peace and clemency, should be clouded by a rebellion which, however impotent, must sensibly afflict him by the calamities it brought on many of his faithful subjects, and by those indispensable returns of severity which their sufferings and the public safety most justly called for."

Lords and Commons were equally zealous in their addresses of thanks for the speech, and declared in favour of prosecuting at once the authors of the measures which had brought the horrors of internecine strife upon the country. Their first act was to expel Forster, and their next to impeach seven of the Jacobite Peers taken at Preston, this being immediately followed by a Bill suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, which Shippen characterised as "encouraging malicious informations, and giving a handle to those in power to oppress innocent people." The rebel lords appeared at the bar of the Court, erected in Westminster Hall, on the 9th of February, Cowper, against his will, being required to act as Lord High Steward on the occasion.

Derwentwater, Carnwath, Widdrington, Nithsdale, Nairn, and Kenmure pleaded guilty and asked for mercy, but there was not

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary, 30th Oct., 1715.

much of that quality just then to spare, and sentence of death was forthwith pronounced upon them, Ministers advising the King not to exercise the prerogative of clemency, but to allow all to be brought to the block. Many Members of both Houses shuddered at the impending sacrifice. Steele and others concurred in expressing their repugnance to any expiatory sheddings of blood, especially after it had become manifest to all that revolt had burned itself out. But Walpole rebuked such dispositions towards lenity. He was throughout the most urgent for severity, and the most inexorable. "He was," he said, "moved with indignation to see that there should be such unworthy members of that great body who could, without blushing, open their mouths in favour of rebels and parricides," and, fearing a reaction towards pity might set in, he moved and carried—though by a majority of seven only—that the House should adjourn until after the day fixed for the executions. The Lords were less easily reconciled to letting the advocates of vengeance have their way. Upon the petition of the unfortunate Peers, Nottingham, who was personally a friend of more than one of them, supported its prayer, and, in spite of the resistance of his surprised colleagues, an Address for a reprieve was carried, after a long debate, by a majority of five. The Cabinet met that night. Divergence of sentiment, hitherto but imperfectly felt, became articulate in open difference of opinion. Marlborough was probably not there; but the majority who still regarded him as their chief recoiled from vindictive measures. The Primate pleaded for mercy; Stanhope drew nearer to Sunderland. In other days when the fate of the fallen trembled between mercy and rigour Royalty had held the scales. Half-a-dozen principal officers of State, and of the Household, were summoned to the Palace to give individual advice or suggestion: but when the die was cast by Elizabeth, Charles, or James, each Privy Councillor went his way, and was reckoned on the morrow in nowise accountable for the decision come to with or without his approval. The act was a judgment of the Crown, as such promulgated and enforced, and to have swathed it in wrappings of Ministerial responsibility would have been to incur the scandal of doubting Right Divine. But when Right Divine had fled Majesty did not sit in consultative council. The seizure by night and immolation of the Clan of Glencoe upon a pretext of

informality in their submission was perpetrated by Royal authority,[1] whether on the suggestion of Dalrymple or Breadalbane, his other Ministers did not know, and the public did not inquire. Once, and once only, during her reign Anne had ventured on an important act of State, in the sudden dismissal of Godolphin without Ministerial countersign. But an essentially different system of rule had now arisen. A mutually chosen number of nobles and functionaries, bound together by no other tie than that of concert for the time being, had undertaken to guide and govern. They did not deceive themselves into identity of feeling at the outset, nor were they unconscious of latent tendencies to divergence in the first twelvemonth of their experiment; but pressure from without, though unacknowledged and undefinable, like the magic of the sustaining force that keeps every limb and organ of the bodily frame in its due appointed position, had hitherto held them together. So long as the recent sense, real or exaggerated, of domestic danger lasted no one asked how or why; but as the compressive bond of unity lost its hold the staves, hitherto convergent and compact, began to yawn.

Stanhope interceded for Nairn, who had been his schoolfellow at Eton, and when the Cabinet refused to concur in recommending a respite he threatened to resign, and thus saved his early friend. Many entreaties were used by persons of influence of either sex to move the pity of the Crown; and when these proved unavailing, large sums were said to have been tendered secretly to individual Ministers. Walpole afterwards stated in the House of Commons that £60,000 had been offered him to save Lord Derwentwater. After prolonged and anxious discussion a compromise was at length agreed to, Widdrington, Carnwath, and Nairn being respited, while orders were sent to the Tower for the execution of the three remaining prisoners the following day. When all hope of clemency was gone, and there was but a few hours between her husband and death, Lady Nithsdale resolved on a desperate scheme for his rescue. She visited him in the Tower with several friends, a sufficiency of female clothing being brought with them in which to dress the Earl; and, having succeeded in lulling the suspicions of the guards, they walked out with him unarrested. It is a sad dissolvent of the charm of chivalry and martyrdom that hung

[1] Letter of King William.

so long around the cause of Jacobitism to read the details of the gross and shabby selfishness with which the daring and devoted Winifred was requited throughout years of exile by her ignoble Lord.[1] Derwentwater and Kenmure paid the forfeit on the scaffold[2] of their blind devotion to the Stuarts; Lord Wintoun, though subsequently tried and sentenced, making good his escape from the Tower. Twenty-two persons were hanged in Lancashire, and four in London. But these bore a small proportion to the number of capital prosecutions. Chief Baron Montagu scolded the jurors who were guilty of acquittal; and Townshend's secretary, in a letter to Stanhope, lamented the apathy which prevailed in cases of treason, "except in two or three of the courts where men of spirit presided."

Lately-acquired power, when plucked by the beard, is too often cruel. It does not feel strong enough to be magnanimous or pitiful, and stops its ears to prayers for mercy in the selfishness of unforgotten fears.

Although rebellion had been effectually quelled, Government thought it well to keep alive the terror of invasion, and to fan the flame of sectarian animosity. Lechmere was supported in his motion calling for the enforcement of the existing penal laws, which no man ventured to incur the obloquy of opposing, and a Bill giving effect to the resolution was accordingly passed, one of the clauses providing for the exemplary punishment of such Papists as should enlist in the Army or Navy.

The wearing of oak-leaves to commemorate the Restoration was taken as a demonstration of hostile feeling; and summary expedients were resorted to for putting it down. Two unhappy soldiers were flogged almost to death in Hyde Park for having committed the enormity; and throughout the country local Justices exercised what they called their discretion by inflicting rigorous pains and penalties for an offence unknown to the law.[3]

Nottingham's expression in the debate that he hoped the rebel Lords would be reprieved if they confessed, and even if they did not confess, surprised and vexed the King, who was told that with such language held in the Peers by the Lord President, he could not, if he suffered the law to take its course

[1] "Caldwell Papers and Book of Caerlaverock."
[2] 24th February, 1716.
[3] Calamy's "Life," Vol. II.

in any case, appear in public with confidence of being treated with respect. Nottingham, Aylesford, and their friends held at his Majesty's pleasure at this time offices worth £15,000 a year, of which they were summarily deprived. The Chancellor was against their removal, and would have let them remain until at least some more insuperable cause for parting should arise; but his deprecation was over-ruled. He himself became the object of distrust and ill-will at Court, and felt that certain "Lords of the Cabinet were resolved to weary him out of it; for they had decided among themselves to put Lord Chief Justice Parker into his place."[1]

Parker was one of the seven Lords of Regency appointed by Statute, who awaited on the shore at Greenwich the arrival of the new King, who had already been taught to regard him as a safe and able man. Facile and suggestive, he quickly became trusty and familiar with the Hanoverian members of the Court; and, being more accommodating than the responsible Ministers, they would have had him take the place of Cowper on the Woolsack. George I. felt, however, that he was in no condition to encourage schism among his makers; the Chief Justice was content for the time with a peerage and a pension of £1,200 a year. While perfecting himself by practice in the arts of Courtier, he made free to differ in debate occasionally with the Chancellor in the House of Lords. There were, indeed, essential points of difference between them. The Chancellor was at last becoming convinced of the unwisdom of allowing the Executive to be identified with the shortsighted interests of Party, and he recoiled from the maxims and measures of those who were capable of sacrificing the great and lasting interests of unrepresented millions to the so-called policy of stamping out epidemic disaffection, or stifling the regrets and repinings of multitudes with whose distinctive notions and beliefs he had, in truth, as little in common as they. The Chief Justice, on the other hand, was not troubled by scruples. Supple and useful, he had risen, was still rising, and meant to rise higher yet. For some weeks Cowper was ill, and meditated retiring. Robethon was instructed to sound him as to whether he would accept the Presidency of the Council, and let Parker be Chancellor. He refused, saying if they would have him quit he would do it; but

[1] Lady Cowper's Diary.

he would not change places. Robethon tried to induce his wife to persuade him, and Bernsdorff endeavoured to bring about the same object by moving the Prince of Wales, whose influence with the Chancellor was known. But the Princess bade Mrs. Clayton tell Lady Cowper that his Royal Highness absolutely declined going into it, unless her lord desired it; and that the Ministry should never draw or force them into anything contrary to the Chancellor's inclination.

Cowper's private letters show that while he disclaimed directing the counsels of Leicester House, where in fact he seldom appeared, he appreciated highly the tact and talent shown by Princess Caroline, and prognosticated good from her influence over her husband. Townshend and he never seemed to have been thoroughly in accord; and various promotions at the bar soon betrayed the existence of other ways to favour. Cowper resented this encroachment on his department, and complained that Townshend permitted his patronage to be taken from him, contrary to usage and, as he argued, to the interest of the public. His remonstrances, however, were deemed little worthy of attention.

A Bill had been prepared at the Treasury giving an additional £100,000 a year to his Majesty, professedly to enable him to make due provision for the Prince of Wales's children, but leaving the amount he was to give for their education wholly to his discretion. It was shown late at night to the Chancellor, and next morning he wrote a letter in somewhat indifferent Latin to the King, stating objections, the most important of which was that it invited unlimited discussion in both Houses on the differences existing in the Royal Family; and that, as parties were certain to be much divided, his influence abroad and his authority at home would be brought into question. Whatever the reply of his Majesty may have been, the differences in the Cabinet were thenceforth widened, the Chancellor was found to be unpersuadable, and the measure was withdrawn.

The death of Marlborough's youngest child, Lady Bridgwater, in March, was followed a few weeks later by that of his favourite daughter, Lady Sunderland, who had exercised a softening influence over the difficult temper of her mother, and the no less intractable disposition of her husband. Marlborough deeply felt her loss; and though he continued to discharge with habitual

care the duties of his office, he hardly ever seemed himself again. Her death affected him more deeply than the less tender nature of the parent whom she was known to regard with more of deference than of love. After the return of Cadogan from the suppression of the Scotch revolt, Marlborough's strength visibly gave way. On the 28th of May, while residing in seclusion at Holywell, he was struck with paralysis, from which he partially recovered; and in October he visited Blenheim, then advancing to completion. With the surrounding estate it had cost the Treasury £240,000, and required £60,000 more, which he was left to provide. Gradually he took less and less interest in political affairs, but he was persuaded by Sunderland to retain his office, and occasionally to attend the House of Lords, where his name is traceable in Committees for some time after.

The grief and anxiety supposed to be the cause of his illness were frequently said to have been aggravated by a message from Oxford, still in the Tower, threatening to expose his correspondence with St. Germains; but no proof has ever been adduced of the fact of the menace or its cogency.[1]

The mob had revelled in triumph over the prisoners as they were led into London from the North, after the suppression of the insurrection; made holiday during their trial, and shouted themselves hoarse at their execution. Yet, so little did the Government rely on these manifestations as tests of public opinion, that within three months they resolved upon a legislative *coup d'état* second only to that of 1689, and justifiable only on grounds of necessity. When the order of things established by the Revolution was still new, popular feeling had been propitiated by the passing of the Triennial Act, whereby in all places where the inhabitants still retained more than a nominal right of election, the conduct of Parliament was every three years submitted to the electoral judgment, thus offering a serious obstacle to permanent retention of Ministerial power. Yet, in 1716, Jacobitism was alleged to be rife in several parts of the country, and many arguments were adduced in support of organic change. Lord Arran had been chosen Chancellor of Oxford on the outlawry of his brother Ormond; and he was now elected High Steward of Westminster, six of the Chapter

[1] Etough's curious *Memorials*, I., 62, *MS.* Written in 1753, no doubt from impressions confidentially derived from Walpole.

voting for Newcastle, and six for him, while Atterbury gave his casting voice. This was said by Government to be a serious indication of the strength and obduracy of disaffection, which they were called on to countervail by all means in their power, and the incident was used in argument to reconcile Whigs to a Septennial Bill, on the ground that in the divided state of the nation it would be hazardous to dissolve Parliament.

The calculations of party had been falsified in the days of William and of Anne at the triennial poll; and the men who had now obtained power required no argument to convince them that it would be pleasanter and more profitable, and why not say more patriotic, to delay giving an account of their stewardship for three or four years beyond the time prescribed by law. But for this it was indispensable to abrogate the law, and by Statute to extend the term for which Parliament was authorised to sit. Scrupulous friends, frightened at the risk, plaintively said to be possible, of a Jacobite majority being returned in 1717, muttered something about the constitutional incompetency of men returned for three years only to vote themselves in possession for seven; but Ministers laughed in their faces, or rated them soundly as pedants, and Addison did not disdain the part of pamphleteer apologist for what he would till lately have eloquently spurned as a factious imputation. Those who were disposed to invest largely in the purchase of seats, complained that frequent elections added needlessly to trouble and expense. These reasons could not with decency be stated, and therefore it was set forth, by the same men who had contributed to carry the Triennial Act, that frequent dissolutions were found to be contrary to the public weal, and dangerous to the peace of the realm.

In the Upper House Argyll, Dorset, and Townshend supported the measure, which was hotly debated, the Opposition being led by Buckingham, Aylesford, Trevor, and Nottingham. Poulett contended that they should ascertain the sentiments of the nation before passing the measure. But after a brilliant speech of young Carteret, the Bill was committed by a majority of thirty-five, and was read a third time on the 18th April. Somers was too ill to attend, but he was known to have signified his acquiescence.

A minority of 121 in the Commons inveighed against what

they termed a usurpation like that of the Long Parliament who voted themselves permanent. But Walpole, in his sick chamber at Chelsea, scornfully smiled at the appeal to precedent, and Stanhope persuaded 264, of whom two-thirds were said to hold places or pensions, to pass the Bill, by the assurance that it would be repealed when the evil spirit was cast out, and the nation found itself tranquil and in its right mind. Seven years came to be regarded as the rightful term in the legislative lease; and no subsequent administration has attempted to shorten it.

Of the thirty-eight Parliaments that have since sat, only four lived to the ripe age of seven years; nine survived for six; ten for five; while the rest all died in infancy. Nor has the law of senatorial mortality become less elastic with the advance of time. Bentham used to say that we moderns ought to be wiser than our ancestors, because in addition to all their knowledge, we have our own of subsequent experience. Be this as it may, we know that in the last three reigns the average longevity of Parliament has not exceeded four years.

CHAPTER III.

ROYAL ABSENTEEISM.

1716.

Influence of Cowper—Old age of Marlborough—Succeeded in Party lead by Sunderland—Under Secretaries Delafaye and Tilson—Addison Chief Secretary—Cabal against Townshend—Jealousy of Prince of Wales—Limitations of Regency—Bremen and Verden annexed—Cabinet Reverts to the Commercial policy of Utrecht—Threatened Invasion by Charles XII.—Admiral Norris can only take orders from the Board of Admiralty—Sunderland and Stanhope at Hanover—Difference with Colleagues at Home—Prince of Wales to open Parliament—Townshend Viceroy—Consultations at Devonshire House.

THE King chafed at being told that he must not go abroad without the permission of Parliament; for so the Act of Succession ran. But as there were other wishes impatiently expressed by his Majesty with which his Ministers did not think it either for his interest or their own to comply, it became matter for consideration what they should resist, and when they should give way. Madame Schuylenberg had been successively created Baroness of Dundalk, Marchioness of Dungannon, and Duchess of Munster in the Irish Peerage, too often treated as a sort of outhouse of honour, where the waifs and strays of fortune were glad to stable their horses until called within the circle of privileged nobility. By descent she claimed the rank of princess; her daughter by the King was about to be presented, and with the influence she was known to possess, and the deference paid her in society, she deemed the measure of her greatness incomplete without the dignity of an English Duchess. The King had no objection, but many of the Cabinet had, and by way of compromise it was suggested that Parliament should be asked to let him spend his autumn in Germany, provided the lady was not

suffered to have her way. Townshend, who rather relished the exercise of Ministerial control over Court and Commons, persuaded his Majesty to defer his journey until they could get the clause in the Act of Anne repealed, and to defer the gift of the coveted Strawberry Leaves until milder political weather. Sir John Cope was directed to propose the legislative change desired; and on the advice of Shippen, his friends forbore opposing what they imagined would furnish a new cause of discontent. But in the Palace, female resentment, hitherto chiefly directed against Walpole, turned still more openly against Townshend, and was not long in finding political sympathy and aid against both. Bernsdorff exulted in Whig misgivings, and flattered his master on his superior appreciation of public feeling. Paternal jealousy insisted that if the Prince of Wales were to be Regent during his father's absence abroad, more than one great officer of State should be associated with him in the duties and responsibilities of Government. Marlborough, Devonshire, Cowper, Sunderland, Townshend, Stanhope, and Walpole met to consider how the Council of Regency should be constituted. Being unanimous in fearing that his Majesty's absence from the Kingdom might prove of serious prejudice to his interests, they felt it their duty to lay before him the reasons which obliged them to be of an opinion that could not but be ungrateful to him. Though Parliament had in two Sessions done all that was suggested, and even more than might have been expected, towards repressing Jacobitism, the rage and spirit of that party were still very far from being extinguished. They had made such accessions of strength during the last four years of the Queen's reign, as appeared by the behaviour of both Universities and even of London itself, that confidence in their numbers, rank, and property encouraged them to enter into sedition upon their own bottom, without any foreign support. They found no precedent in former reigns for vesting the powers of Regency otherwise than in the Heir Apparent to the Throne, and any departure in this respect from ancient practice would furnish additional cause of misgiving, it was to be feared, and supply the malicious with fresh subjects of misrepresentation.[1] George I. waxed exceeding wroth at what he deemed an attempt by the Cabinet to overrule his legitimate discretion in the management of his family.

[1] Townshend to Bernsdorff, 19th March, 1716.—*MS.*

Townshend, often brusque in argument with the German favourites, fell into disgrace, and Walpole fared no better because he refused to reimburse certain expenses which the King had incurred in bringing over a body of troops from Hanover during the rebellion, which on its suppression were found to be unnecessary. By way of compromise, the title of Guardian and Lieutenant of the Realm, instead of Regent, was conferred on the Prince, and he submitted to certain limitations being imposed on his authority.

Precise instructions from his father prescribed rigidly what he might and what he might not do. The conduct of all foreign affairs was to remain as before. No Archbishop or Peer was to be made, and no person was to be admitted to the Cabinet or the Privy Council, and no one was to be displaced from either, without his Majesty's express direction. Titles of honour, commissions in the Army, Navy, Ordnance, Governorships of Forts or Plantations, Orders of the Garter or St. Andrew, and all grants of pensions or Crown lands were specifically reserved. If Parliament should pass any Bill of emergency it must abide the Royal assent from abroad. Ordinary felons might be reprieved on due cause shown, but pardon for high treason belonged to the Crown alone. The functionaries of various ranks and degrees appointed by Royal warrant to meet at St. James's from time to time, under the presidency of the Prince Guardian, though including most of the great officers of State, had no collective identity with either the conferences in closet of past reigns or those held by mutual agreement at the Cockpit, without the presence or interposition of Majesty. If a traditional likeness were to be traced, it must be sought rather in the Sanhedrim devised by Temple, and remembered only for its fruitless failure, but from which, save in its misnomer, it was essentially distinguishable. Several of the Judges and certain military officers were included; the Clerks of the Council were present; the resolutions come to were meant for publication, and they appeared in the *Gazette* accordingly.

The German Ministers wished to signalise their triumph in obtaining the repeal of the Permissory Clause regarding the Sovereign leaving the Kingdom by obtaining English titles. Bernsdorff wanted to be an earl, Bothmar and Robethon baronets. With great difficulty George I. was brought to understand the imprudence of granting these demands, and when they were

refused it was not surprising that muttered vows of resentment should have been overheard. Lady Townshend could not endure the idea of her husband's absence for a considerable time, and it was agreed that he should remain at home, and that Stanhope should accompany the King. No jealousy or mistrust disturbed the mind of either, and the public in general betrayed no uneasiness at the Sovereign's preferring Gohrdt for his summer residence, or disquietude at the Heir Apparent's occupying Hampton Court as his Viceroy. The Dissenters clung to the hopes on which they had been fed, that they should be reinstated ere long in all the privileges of citizenship; and that whoever might be Ministers George I. would prove himself grateful for their fidelity. Dr. Chandler, an eminent divine, wrote to a friend: "This morning dear King George came publicly through the city, for the Tower, in order to go to Holland. I saw with the usual satisfaction that good and great man. He looked up and smiled upon his people." [1]

It was proposed that Devonshire should succeed Nottingham as President of the Council, Sunderland to be Privy Seal without salary and sole Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, Kent to be Lord Steward, Kingston Master of the Horse, Conyers D'Arcy to have the Buckhounds, Montrose to be Clerk Register of Scotland, and Roxburgh to take his place as Secretary, Tankerville and Leicester to be Lords in Waiting, and Cobham to be Constable of Windsor Castle.[2] But this programme was not finally adhered to. In the political map the affairs of the world were divided into North and South; the great Powers of the Continent, Spain, France, Bavaria, Savoy, the Austrian Empire, and that of the Ottoman Porte, engaging the attention of one Secretary of State; while those of Great Britain, the United Provinces, Hanover, Saxony, and Brandenburg, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and Muscovy occupied that of the other.

The King, ere he went abroad, advised his daughter-in-law to confide in Cowper as the most disinterested politician in England. The Princess disliked Townshend, whom in private she called the "sneeringest, fawningest knave that ever was." Hervey and Chesterfield, though estimating his domestic qualities differently, concur in describing his manners as coarse and ill-bred. Sunder-

[1] "Monthly Repository," XVI., 197, 1821.
[2] Townshend *MS.*, July, 1716.

land avowed that he was for restrictions on the Regent, but Caroline thought better of him than Townshend. How soon the old practices of corruption struck root anew under the altered system of Government needs no accumulation of proof. Formerly every new place or pension was directly accepted as the gift of the Crown, and reversions were only considered worth paying for in ready money when the Royal assent had been made safe. Sunderland's father paid Sir Joseph Williamson £6,500 for the Secretaryship of State,[1] which his mother thought it would be very hard that they should lose when he was removed; in other words, that Charles II., having been cognisant of the transaction, was equitably bound to make good the loss.[2] Throughout the preceding reigns official bribery, in numberless forms, betrayed itself, and was sometimes reprimanded for the indecency of exposure; but nobody affected to exonerate the head of the State from winking hard; and now that patronage had been put in commission, to be exercised by the principal Ministers, the King's acquiescence was generally taken for granted in matters the merits of which he could not be supposed to understand, and with the details of which he was irritable at being bored. When, as often happened, a competitor for favour tried to reach by a clandestine way the Royal ear, while the word of a Minister had been pledged to another, a convenient mode of solving the difficulty lay in the intervention of one or other of those female friends whom his Majesty delighted to honour, but who could not be expected to be troubled with business for nothing.

Stanhope, less tarnished than others with complicity in such intrigues, was engrossed with affairs of his own department. D'Huxelles and most of the French Ministers were known to be averse from contracting intimate relations with England, but the Regent, bent on pursuing that policy as best suited to secure his own position, and struck by the tone of confidence and familiarity in Stanhope's letters to Dubois, secretly despatched the Abbé to the Hague, there to await the arrival of his friend. Ostensibly his purpose was to buy pictures, books, and horses for his master. His instructions were to satisfy the General that France was as anxious, and as ready, to enter into binding en-

[1] Echard, quoted by Glencowe, II., 51.

[2] Lady Sunderland to H. Sidney, 25th Jan., 1681.

gagements of amity and reciprocal benefit as Austria or the States General.

Symptoms of schism amongst the Whigs began to appear, and Sunderland, before leaving for Hanover, visited the Duchess to learn her views, for she still loved power more and money less than her husband had ever done. The recent death of Lady Anne, far from weakening the Earl's favour in her mother's eyes, drew her more than ever towards him; and she induced Marlborough to alter his will, and, instead of leaving the chief part of his fortune to Lady Godolphin, to bequeath it to the Spencers. Thenceforth Sunderland felt himself, and was looked upon by others, as the head of the Marlborough party.

The Prince Guardian resided at Hampton Court with his household and certain officers of State. Townshend and Walpole had their respective apartments, where they felt bound to show liberal hospitality, while their Under Secretaries, with their staffs from Whitehall, kept the mechanism of the Executive in regular motion.

Charles Delafaye, son of a Court physician, began his official life as Secretary to the Lords Justices in Ireland. Soon after, through his father's influence with some of his noble patients, he succeeded in exchanging that office for an Under-Secretaryship at Whitehall. There we find him corresponding daily with Tilson, who held a similar post in another department; and between them not a few gleams of light are shed on otherwise dark places. Tilson advised his chief, Stanhope, then in Hanover, that both the King's friends and enemies in Scotland agreed in opposing the trials for treason at Carlisle, and it was doubtful whether the list of cases could be got through at the Assize from the listlessness that prevailed. There appeared, moreover, to be a widening schism among the clergy, owing to a revival of the non-juring spirit, which might need resort to more stringent measures, certain to prove obnoxious to the Universities.[1] The Prince of Wales dwelt at Hampton Court, and the attendance of the Secretary of State and of the head of the Treasury seemed indispensable to keep up the dignity and punctuality of regal clock-work; and had their daily presence afforded opportunities of personal conciliation, either or both

[1] 8th Sept., 1716—*MS.*

would, no doubt, have been glad of it. His Royal Highness was uniformly "civil, but that was all, for they were convinced that he hated them." His unofficial courtesies were, in fact, bestowed on visitors, the chief of whom were objects of distrust to his responsible advisers. Argyll was still received on the old footing of intimacy as when he was Groom of the Stole, and his brother Islay constantly came from his seat at Isleworth to pay his court with Shrewsbury, Uxbridge, Ossory, Carlton, and Windsor, all of whom resided in Middlesex or Surrey. The time had not come for confidence in one so little likely to be recommended to the Princess as Walpole, and both he and his brother-in-law appear, by their own account, to have been more afraid of being thought by the King to stand too well in her husband's favour. They were, in fact, beset with alternate suspicion of seeking to promote the aims of the Prince at the expense of the King's prerogative, and of allowing him, through their want of nerve or tact, to fall into the hands of a Junto, who had all country houses at a few miles distance that might facilitate caballing. Conformably to orders, Walpole presented a patent revoking Argyll's pension of £2,000 a year, which the Prince refused to sign. In law it remained good, but no money would be paid upon it without direction, which Stanhope might be sure would not be had. If his Majesty were acquainted with this, they were of opinion it would be advisable not to send any orders about it for fear of disturbing the Prince, who seemed disposed to be easy just then.[1]

Townshend meanwhile tried to make way with the Prince of Wales through the influence of Mrs. Howard. The Chancellor did not hesitate to counsel his ill-mannered colleague on the imprudence and ill-breeding of his conduct, which gradually changed towards her Royal Highness, and in the eyes of the Court matters were set right. But Townshend persistently strove as best he might to extol the merits of Parker, whom Cowper had helped to make Chief Justice, and who the Secretary would fain have succeed him on the Woolsack. Sunderland, at his visit to take leave, could not contain his irritability and impatience regarding the Secretary for the Northern Department, and in a conversation with the Princess, whose paramount desire

[1] Walpole to Stanhope, 30th August, 1716.

was to keep all smooth among Ministers, broke out in tones so passionate that she bade him beware lest through the open windows persons in the garden should overhear them. "Then let them hear," was his reply. Her Royal Highness quietly observed, "You had better walk next the window, for in the humour we both are in, one of us must jump out, and I am resolved it shan't be me." His Lordship protested to Townshend that he meant him no ill-will, and that his going abroad was only to hasten, if possible, his Majesty's return.

Ministers felt themselves treated with great coldness and reserve. This state of things could only be ended by the King's shortening his sojourn abroad. Any suggestion of the kind would no doubt be ascribed to personal aims and interests; but things were come to such a pass that they felt themselves obliged to overlook the censure their fidelity might incur.[1]

The Princess valued highly Cowper's advice, and intimated through his wife that she wished to see him oftener under existing circumstances. Impaired health and difficulty of agreement with Townshend would, he hoped, plead his excuse for not meddling in affairs not especially within his department, the probable result of which would be the questioning of his interference, and consequent diminution of his power to be of real use. "Should H.R.H. ever come to the Crown, while he had health and any degree of understanding left, he would dedicate them and all his time towards making him great. But in the present situation he thought he must seem not only not elated with, but scarcely sensible of, his goodness to him."[2] In spite, however, of his prudent reticence and abstension, his infrequent visits were enough to feed the worm of jealousy that dieth not, and the Chancellor was regarded by Townshend as one of his Cabinet enemies.[3] Cowper "defied anyone to produce a single instance of his having made an ill use of the confidence with which his Royal Highness was pleased to honour him, or of the Prince's having invaded the Royal prerogative in the minutest branch, or having in any particular deviated from that entire submission which he ought to show his father."

In the growing heats and divisions in Court and Cabinet,

[1] Tilson to Stanhope, 19th Aug., 1716.—*MS.*

[2] To Lady Cowper, 1st Sept., 1716.

[3] Townshend to Slingsland, 1st Jan., 1717.—*MS.*

Townshend and Walpole held fast by Stanhope, to whose choice as Leader in the Commons they took pride in having contributed, and with whom they kept up relations of fraternal confidence. But at the end of July they became uneasy at reports which had reached them regarding Sunderland and Cadogan, who were, they believed, privy to schemes for their displacement, and the transfer of the General to some high military command. They consequently let him know that these designs were carried further, and better supported, than they imagined while he was at home, and that "all the foreigners were engaged on that side. The Duchess of Munster entered into the dispute with more than ordinary zeal and resentment; insomuch that by an account they had of a conversation with the King at her apartments, nothing but the want of time and the hurry he was in upon his going away, prevented a change of Ministry, to be carried upon the Whig foot, exclusive of them, there being no difficulty at all in removing Walpole. Stanhope, it was thought, might be taken care of in the Army, but they were at a loss regarding Townshend." How far the King gave in to it was not sufficiently explained, or whether he was more than passive during the conversation. It seemed so contradictory to the accounts he always had of the King's behaviour to Lords Townshend and Stanhope, that the writer was at a loss how to question what was positively affirmed, or to believe what was so extraordinary and irreconcilable.[1]

Walpole had not yet quite recovered from his recent illness, and feeling himself still ailing, he resolved to take a month's rest in Norfolk to enable him to lay in a stock of health for the winter. He certainly did not try to excuse his proposed absence from Hampton Court by any attenuation of the difficulties there. If possible, the King should be induced to return for the meeting of Parliament, but if not, it had better be postponed till after Christmas. If the Prince Guardian were allowed to open the Session, the ceremony ought not to be delayed beyond November, for financial reasons, and because, if his Royal Highness were led to imagine a further postponement was only meant to defeat an object he had much at heart, he would probably ascribe it to Ministers, and let his resentment afford encouragement to Opposition in the spring. If by suffering the Prince to

[1] R. Walpole to Stanhope, 30th July, 1716.

hold the Parliament the King agreed to put the whole affairs of the winter into his hands, it should be done in such a manner as would not engage his Highness in measures opposite to the interest of his Majesty. The state of the revenue was such, and the condition of the Civil List so easy, that no fresh supply would be actually wanted till the new year; for though there would be a deficit in the Exchequer of more than half a million, it might be provided for by postponing the clearings on allowances, and the payment of off reckonings to the Navy. In every aspect the financial condition of the country was prosperous: money was cheap, stocks were high, the Treasury was able to get whatever money it wanted on its Tallies at four instead of six per cent.; finally, the First Lord announced that he was busy in forming a scheme for paying the debts of the nation, and did not despair of being able to propose what should be effectual for the purpose in case all things remained quiet, and they had no disturbance nor alarms from abroad. In ordinary circumstances this clever balancing of prejudices and predilections between Hampton Court and Göhrdt might have prolonged the suspense midway between the Sovereign and his son. Without any indication or tendency to cringe towards either, those who felt within themselves the real ability to govern were ready to look either way and to move compliantly in matters of ceremonial, provided they were undisturbed. The alleged avowal of the Prince's readiness to act the part of King at Westminster before his time, may not have struck the mind of Stanhope with the misgiving or concern wherewith it filled the Electoral Ministers and favourites, but it tended to pave the way for proposals from the Cabinet at home which, had Walpole foreseen their effect, he would hardly have suggested in terms so plain.

George I., relieved from the trammels of kingship in a land where he still felt strange, resumed with enhanced zest his old ways of life in Hanover. He was not less of an irresponsible Prince for having for nearly two years worn a crown, and his courtiers told him he was a good deal more. His German Chancellor, tired of being over-ruled by English Ministers, thought the opportunity good for making the importance of the Electorate felt, and he lost no occasion of reminding his master that the least compensation he might have for sojourning so

long beyond sea and submitting to a Cabinet of insular nobles, would be the practical acknowledgment of his hereditary right to act on his own judgment in German affairs. Bernsdorff had reasons of his own for stimulating George I. to assert himself more than he had recently done among neighbours and allies; and though he was too wary to mutter this audibly within English ear-shot, it seems clear that, through Madame de Platen or otherwise, Stanhope gradually came to understand the mixed motives that animated him. The foreign policy of the Government was early directed to the acquisition for Hanover of Bremen and Verden, which by the treaty of Westphalia had been ceded, with other conquests, to Sweden, and subsequently occupied by Denmark. The Dukes of Brunswick and Zell despaired of being able to bring back either within the circle of the Empire; and until his accession to the Throne of England, George I. had not ventured to provoke the resentment of Charles XII. by questioning any of his German conquests. His Hanoverian Ministers fondly hoped that the forcible purchase of Bremen and Verden, advised by Stanhope and Townshend, with English money, if ratified by the Emperor and the States-General, might enable them to escape the penalty of war with their still formidable neighbour. In the Cabinet there was little or no difference of opinion on the question. Securities for the freedom of trade with Hamburg and the interior of Germany from capricious molestation or impediment by any foreign power was held to be worth the price and the contingent risk of quarrel. The Dutch Ministers, who were always against further entanglements by Treaty between warlike rivals, would have had them let it alone; but the English Envoy at the Hague was set to compose a commercial argument to bring them round, and to persuade the doubtful at home of the excellence of the bargain, and Walpole undertook to furnish the money. Abbé Dubois obtained the removal of all difficulties of recognition by the Government of France, and the Swedish Envoy in London was requested to inform his master that the British Treasury was ready to pay him the full value of the Prince Bishoprics that would henceforth form part of the Electorate of Hanover.

The rage of the Swedish King was unspeakable; but, in the desperate condition of his affairs, he did not suddenly throw off the mask of peace. His Prime Minister, Gortz, was instructed

to offer the Dutch any terms for their aid, or even for their armed neutrality. M. Gyllenbourg was authorised to stick at nothing that might stir the embers of disaffection in England, and to promise a powerful expedition in the spring on behalf of the Pretender.

It appeared by a despatch of Townshend's that Charles XII. had concluded a Treaty with the Jacobite rebels in France, by which they were to be taken into his service, and to enjoy the same rank and pay they had been told to expect under James III. Admiral Norris was consequently ordered to join his fleet with that of Denmark, with which Sweden was then at war.[1] Unlimited offers were made at Versailles in the hope of averting the apprehended alliance with England, and couriers sped from Madrid to Stockholm to bring about the startling combination advised by Alberoni for a total reconstruction of the balance of Western Christendom. But the interests of Orleans daily detached him more than ever from the hazardous schemes of Spain. Should Louis XV. not live to manhood, Philip V. would infallibly claim the Throne of France, and meanwhile he would probably seek to undermine the Regent's Government. A leading aim of English policy under every Administration had long been to defeat the Union of the Bourbon crowns, and no mutual guarantee could be, therefore, so obvious or binding as one between the House of Orleans and the House of Hanover. Dubois made way with his skilful suggestions of reciprocal advantages, and offered such confidential proofs of sincerity that he was invited to visit Göhrdt.

Notwithstanding all they had said when it suited their purpose against the Treaty of Utrecht, Townshend and Stanhope readily entered into the offers held out by France for a renewal of commercial relations, and not only was the condemned Treaty made the basis of the new pact, but most of its reciprocal provisions were re-enacted. One of these related to Dunkirk, the works of which had been dismantled, and the harbour made useless by the French, as had been required. But close by, a new haven called Mardyke was much improved, in evasion, as it was said, of the agreement at Utrecht. Ministers feared to avow the contemplated alliance without being able to show that they had made good this stipulation; and Townshend insisted upon

[1] To the Admiral, 3rd July, 1716.—*MS.*

it so vehemently in discussion with M. d'Ibberville that at length the French Envoy yielded. It was agreed to ruin the *fascinages*, and to reduce the sluice to the breadth of sixteen feet, which, in the opinion of the most skilful engineers, would more effectually exclude ships of war and privateers than what was at first proposed." [1]

The hostility of Charles XII. waxed keener every day, and the consequent suspicion with which his representative in London was regarded. Help from Sweden appeared to the Jacobites to be more hopeful than from France. Her impulsive Sovereign was full of resentment, and his Minister in London was more than suspected of distributing, if not inspiring, inflammatory pamphlets, as appeared from his intercepted letters. Townshend thought that when amity with France was a little more assured, M. Gyllenbourg ought to be ordered to quit the Kingdom.[2] His colleague concurred in the suggestion, and, at the instance of the King, left it to the Government at home to put in execution the measure as soon as they had intelligence of the ratification of the French Treaty.

George I. probably believed, and his German Ministers certainly strove to make him believe, that if he were only firm in asserting his Sovereign rights, he might emancipate himself from the shackles of Constitutional control. Apparently, without apprehending the difficulty and danger of his position, they drew him on to make proposals which Stanhope and Sunderland had not the resolution peremptorily to reject, but preferred to hold in abeyance till the judgment of the Cabinet could be known.

Peter the Great, then at his zenith, was the meteor that kept all Europe at gaze. For years a desolating strife had been on foot between the northern Powers, which English good offices vainly strove to appease. Muscovite aggression was not confined to Sweden; it sought to make prey of Denmark also, whose Sovereign implored counsel from the Elector-King, and the protecting presence of the British Fleet. Bernsdorff urged the necessity of seizing the Russian squadron, and detaining the Czar as a hostage for the evacuation of Denmark and Mecklenburg. Stanhope recalled the policy of Cromwell, who had sent

[1] Under Sec. Poyntz to Stanhope, at Hanover, 11th Sept., 1716.
[2] Townshend to Stanhope, 15th Sept., 1716.—*MS.*

more than one fleet to the Baltic to secure freedom of trade with each of the States contending for supremacy there; and the recorded fact that he offered to purchase Bremen from Sweden with that view. If it were now given up, and Denmark humbled, he feared that within three years the Czar would be absolute master in the Northern Seas—so completely was he carried away by the panic, real or feigned, of those around him. Bernsdorff vehemently urged a *coup de main*. The chief part of his inheritance lay in Mecklenburg, where the presence of the autocrat no longer seemed to be resisted, and George I., hearkening to his veteran advisers, pressed Stanhope to countersign an Order to Admiral Norris for its immediate execution. The General hesitated, not from any scruple of policy, but on the ground that such an Order could only be given through the Board of Admiralty on a resolution of the Cabinet.

In no little perplexity, he wrote home: "The King asked how far I could venture to give orders to the Admiral. I said that as far as joining his good offices with those of the King of Denmark, I would make no difficulty; and I would accordingly write to Sir John Norris by express. But the King desires you will seriously consider of the matter, and of the instructions for the Fleet. I do verily believe things will come to an *eclat*, perhaps before I can have an answer from you. I shall check my own nature, which was ever inclined to bold strokes, till I hear from you. You may easily imagine how I shall be daily pressed to send orders to Norris. The truth is, I see no daylight through these affairs. We may easily master the Czar if we go briskly to work. If he be let alone he will not only be master of Denmark, but, with the body of troops he has still behind on the borders of Poland, he may take quarters where he pleases in Germany. How far the King of Prussia is concerned with him we do not know, nor will that Prince explain himself. The King wishes, and so do I, heartily, that we had secured France. The Abbé showed me a part of a despatch from Marshal D'Huxelles, whereby they promise that the moment our Treaty is signed they will frankly tell us everything they know touching the Jacobite plots from the beginning."[1] Stanhope took Dubois for the first time to see his Majesty, and at the end of the interview they parted well satisfied with each other.

[1] To Townshend, 25th Sept., 1716.—*MS.*

Townshend's reply deprecated strongly a rupture with the Czar as certain to involve dangerous consequences; and in a secret despatch he warned his colleague that war in the North would be the ruin of the Ministry, and that sooner than exasperate Sweden further, they ought to take the first opportunity of making peace, even at a considerable sacrifice. The continuance of the fleet in the Baltic after winter set in would leave the coast of England defenceless from Swedish attack, and could not, therefore, be advised; but if the King of Denmark seriously feared treachery on the part of his Muscovite visitor, and thought himself strong enough to anticipate the blow, the English Government would not object to assurances being secretly given him of eventual support in case of open war. This counter project did not satisfy the German Councillor, and Sunderland and Stanhope could not be unconscious of the widening divergency between them and their brother Ministers at home. In answer to assurances from Robethon that the King was likely to insist on the squadron being left to winter in the Baltic, Under-Secretary Poyntz was commanded to say that Lord Townshend "was out of all temper to see what ridiculous expedients they proposed for extricating themselves out of their difficulties, as if the leaving eight men of war to be frozen up for six months would signify five grains towards giving a new turn to the affairs of the North." [1]

In the course of the summer Peter had agreed to act in concert with the King of Denmark, and was still an invited though distrusted guest at Copenhagen; but his promised contingent did not arrive till the middle of September, when a Council of War declared it was too late to make a descent on the opposite coast. His real design was suspected to be that of treacherous surprise; and if he dreamt of making the Baltic a Russian lake, what security would there be for the independence of Hanover? England had still the power to curb his ambition and preserve the balance of the Scandinavian States; but if, irresolute, she waited until Charles XII. and Peter had come to a compromise, the opportunity would be lost, and the Tartar would have made his way to the ocean. Stanhope probably discounted these alarms at their actual value, but knew that the proposal of Bernsdorff would never have been made without the

[1] 25th September, 1716.

cognisance and approval of his master; and he suspended any decisive answer until he had time to learn the sentiments of his colleagues in the Cabinet. He did not conceal, however, his misgivings. Bernsdorff sent orders to Norris to act with vigour, but the Admiral refused, on the specific ground that it came from the Government of Hanover, and not from the Government of England.

In spite of all that Robethon and Bothmar could urge, the Council at home remained unmoved. They were not insensible to Peter's liability to fits of earth-hunger, but they felt themselves in no way called on to undertake the discipline of his passion or the impeachment of his future designs against his neighbours, and they shrank from an abrupt breach of the peace with him which would probably entail all the evils of open war. They were ready to confirm the Triple Alliance with Holland and France, because, among other advantages, it might enable them to bring the belligerents of the North to compose their differences, and to suffer peace to prevail in the Baltic. No proof eventually transpired that Peter was meditating the treachery to Denmark imputed to him, and Norris returned with his ships to the Downs, with the unpublished merit in the eyes of his employers of having made the descendant of Charles I. understand that a British fleet could only act upon orders from a British Ministry.

The King was much surprised at being thus told that Parliament would not concern itself with what took place in Germany, which he looked upon as not only exposing him to all kinds of affront, but even to ruin. He agreed with Sunderland and Stanhope and disagreed with what he called the old Tory notion that England could subsist by itself, whatever became of the rest of Europe.[1]

His Majesty was mortified at finding himself compelled to own how little power he exercised over the armaments of the realm whereof he was called King. Bred in a petty school of absolutism, and incapable of comprehending the still novel system of government at the gilded apex of which he had been placed, it was not strange that he learned with bitterness his first humiliating lesson in constitutionalism, and took especially ill the bluntness of tone in which it had been laid down

[1] Sunderland to Townshend from Göhrdt, 11th November, 1716.—*MS.*

by the Secretary for the Northern Department. Influences not hitherto convergent thenceforth combined to fan his resentment into flame. Townshend had hoped to appease the enmity of the Great Lady by allowing her to obtain (for several thousand considerations best known to herself) the Barony of Battersea[1] for the father of Bolingbroke, which the Viscount had asked for him in vain. But the newly-made Duchess was not narrow-minded in her willingness to promote claims to the Peerage; and she was surprised and angry at impediments being thrown in the way of Sir Richard Child's ambition. Townshend objected that the worthy banker was an active member of Opposition whom the Cabinet could not afford to have put over the heads of several of their aspiring supporters. He had, moreover, exasperated Bothmar, the King's confidential correspondent in London, by backing the refusal of Walpole to promote his scheme for the sale of French lands in St. Christopher's, which were held to be escheats of the Crown under the treaty of Utrecht, and for a large portion of which the Baron had obtained a promise for himself. Both disappointed traffickers in Royal weakness spared no pains to misrepresent the Minister's unyielding disposition as insolence and faction; and when delays and difficulties arose in the Treaty with the French and Dutch, George I. betrayed a feeling of irritation and resentment not to be mistaken. Sunderland, though reticent, rejoiced at these additional provocations and pretexts for the changes in office on which he had set his heart. He had never forgiven Townshend's attempt to take a seat above him at the Cabinet table; and though possessed himself of three offices instead of his rival's one, as these did not give him a lead in great affairs, he continued to resent his arrogant and dictatorial tone; and sooner or later he was determined to regain the position he had once occupied of Secretary of State. Townshend was an upright, fearless, and, in his way, patriotic Minister, but fortune had helped to spoil him.

He had outrun not a few of his superiors for the prize of power, and, heated in the race, he had never thoroughly cooled. He understood well what was expected of him by his colleagues. He had all the courage and constancy requisite to fulfil the implied condition that they should feel and be felt to be collec-

[1] 2nd July, 1716.

tively supreme. Sunderland, who in fortune and family looked on him as his inferior, waited impatiently for the time when he might edge him from his path. Marlborough's declining strength and influence, and his own embarrassments, the result of play, compelled his pride to take counsel of prudence to dissemble his spleen, and to affect deference to the will of his colleagues, that he might eventually rise above them. Before going abroad, he asked Townshend and Walpole to tell him what line they wished him to take during his sojourn should he visit Hanover, as he desired nothing so much as to show that all past feuds had been reconciled, and that there was perfect union between them. But his craving for power was inappeasable, and to Hanover he bent his way. There he began to spread his nets for all that might contribute to his future ends. Official ambition was the vital pulse of his being. On his travels he maintained without question the repute of fidelity to party. At Göhrdt he found more than one subject apt for his interposition. The German Chancellor and his colleagues were won by courteous attention, wherewith they had been scantily favoured in England; and Countess de Platen, more envious than ever of her Duchess rival, caught at every hint from within the Cabinet of how her family wishes might be realised if the proposed negotiation with France were brought to success.

In the daily interchange of confidential counsels, Stanhope and Sunderland soon came to murmur in concert against their overruling colleague at home, who, seeing no probability of the King's return before winter to England, naturally paid more attention to the young Prince of Wales, and his Highness daily saw more of Argyll and his brother Islay than the jealousy of the absent monarch could be made to understand.

Bolingbroke about this time confided to the charge of James Craggs the younger, who happened to be in Paris, a careful letter to Sir W. Wyndham, telling him to hand it to his father to read or send on as he thought fit. The Postmaster-General brought it to Townshend, and asked what he was to do, and was desired to make a copy and forward it forthwith. Its obvious drift was to dissuade his friend from touching the futile schemes of the Jacobites, which he knew were again afloat in England, and to make evidence uncalled-for of his returning readiness to be loyal. He spoke of the Pretender's projects as

far advanced, and of the fresh combinations throughout the Kingdom being inflated with hopes which he deemed illusory, the Regent of France being thoroughly resolved to throw himself into the cause of Hanover.[1] Bolingbroke's information of the real intentions of the French Government was no doubt better than that of his old associates. "Depend upon what I say to you, my dearest friend, nothing can be so desperate as the circumstances of affairs, nothing so miserable as the characters, nothing so weak as their measures, and whoever represents things in another light is guilty either of gross ignorance or scandalous artifice. The ardent and sincere affection which I bear you, and which I shall carry to the grave with me, exacts this admonition from me, and the rather because the knowledge I have of some part of what is doing, and the guess I make at the particulars which I do not certainly know, incline me to think that I should not neglect a moment in so material an affair. If other persons speak another language, they have one of these two motives: either the heat of their temper or their ignorance of facts makes them deceive themselves first and their friends afterwards; or else, having nothing left to lose, and, by consequence, nothing to hazard, they imagine it very lawful and very politic to expose as many as they can to the same situation they are already in. Let me, therefore, conjure you, on no account whatever, to enter into any measure till, by some means or other, we have contrived to meet, which I hope will not prove impracticable. Keep yourself till then absolutely free from all engagements, and remember that the time will come when you will own this advice to be the truest instance of friendship which I can give. The people of St. Germains and Avignon were never more sanguine in appearance, and yet the Regent will undoubtedly throw himself *à corps perdu* into the King of England's interest. Adieu, my dear Willy, ever much more yours than my own. What I write is only for you and one or two of our bosom friends. The inference to be drawn from it, and the use to be made of it, ought to be as general as your concerns for persons reaches. I give you this caution the rather because some things which I writ over, and which were by no means proper to rebound back hither, did, however, do so. You will easily guess this not to be very proper; perhaps not

[1] Townshend to Stanhope, 15th Sept., 1716.—*MS.*

very safe for me. This letter comes to you sealed with a head, and will go under our friend Jemmy's cover." [1]

Several of the Ministers being out of town, the Chancellor, Lord President, the Duke of Bolton, the First Lord of the Admiralty, Secretary Townshend, Chief Justice Parker, met at Devonshire House to consider what heads of business should be laid before Parliament. The intercepted letters of Count Gyllenbourg seemed to require prompt measures of vigilance and activity to thwart the designs of Sweden, for which purpose a squadron asked for by the Czar should be sent to the Baltic as soon as the season opened to support his descent on Finland. It was further resolved that for policy's sake concessions theretofore withheld should be made to Russia, the only power in the actual condition of affairs in the North worth securing as an ally.[2]

But when the Secretary unwarily wrote proposing that the Prince Guardian should, in his father's absence, open Parliament, the rage of the King blazed so high that Sunderland and Stanhope thought the moment come for effecting a change of hands and re-distribution of parts. Stanhope accordingly wrote by desire of his Majesty naming Townshend, without his leave, Viceroy of Ireland, and Methuen Secretary of State in his room. On the same day he wrote to Walpole—"I do in my conscience believe this was the only measure which could secure the continuance of a Whig Administration with any ease to the King, who has been more uneasy of late than I care to say, and I must own I think he has reason, even though I don't pretend to know so much of the matter as he does. He is jealous of certain intimacies with the brothers Argyll and Islay; I hope his presence in England and the behaviour of our friends in the Cabinet will remove these jealousies. None can contribute more to this than yourself and Lord Townshend; and I have assured the King that you will do so. You know that ill offices have been done you here, which might have made some impression if my Lord Sunderland and I had not in good earnest endeavoured to prevent it. You will believe that our endeavours were sincere when I shall have told you with frankness our scheme for the Ministry. In case my Lord Townshend accepts of Ireland, which for a thousand reasons he ought to do, the Cabinet will

[1] Bolingbroke to Wyndham, 13th Sept., 1716.—*MS.*

[2] Townshend to Stanhope, 2nd Nov., 1716.—*MS.*

remain just as it was with the addition of the Duke of Kingston as Privy Seal. Mr. Methuen and I shall continue Secretaries. If he should decline Ireland and prevail upon you, which I cannot think possible, to offer to quit your employments, the King has engaged Lord Sunderland to be Secretary; and that I (unequal as I am) should be Chancellor of the Exchequer. It highly concerns me that you should stay where you are. I am very sorry that my Lord Townshend's temper has made it impracticable for him to continue Secretary. The King will not bear him in that office, be the consequence what it will. He cannot refuse Ireland without declaring to the world that he will serve upon no other terms than being Viceroy over father, son, and the three Kingdoms. Is the Whig interest to be staked in defence of such a pretension?" Can it be believed that, however implacable may have been the aversion of the Duchess of Munster, Chancellor Bernsdorff, and Lord Sunderland, George I. would have been able to remove Townshend had Stanhope resisted the change; or that he would have become the instrument for its accomplishment, if he had not felt sure of the approval of the rest of the Cabinet? It is worthy of note, that to compass the displacement of Townshend, his rival had not hesitated to resign two of the three offices he had held, and to sit in the Cabinet with no higher official rank than that of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland. How soon the curb of such unwonted self-denial snapped, we have seen.

It had been from the outset agreed that every official act should be done in the name of the King as of yore; that at every audience each Minister should go on bended knee, and that all should be styled his Majesty's servants. For that matter, so were the players; but who believed that they "spoke the speech he prayed them as he pronounced it to them"; or that the cast of parts was left to the Chamberlain's discretion? Had the two absentee Ministers harboured the least doubt that the majority of the Cabinet were with them, they would never have dreamt of taking the Seals of the Northern Department thus abruptly from their colleague. They felt it might involve a still greater loss, by the resentful withdrawal of Walpole from the Treasury, but, even thus, they knew themselves to be on the stronger side, and they only used perfunctorily the name of the King.

Enclosing his letter of submission to the King, Townshend reproached Stanhope in brief but bitter terms. "My heart is so full with the thoughts of having received this usage from you, to whom I have always been so faithful a friend, that you will excuse my not saying any more at this time. I pray God to forgive you; I do. Lord Sunderland will, I am persuaded, excuse my not answering his letter."[1]

To the King he gave in minute detail the steps he had taken to forward the conclusion of the Treaty with France, which M. Dubois had complained of being needlessly delayed, but which he protested that both he and Methuen desired sincerely to complete.[2]

But such expostulation came too late; for sake of appearance the French Minister still persisted, though in moderated tones, in insinuating that the Council in England had been tardy in forwarding the plenary powers deemed necessary for the ratification of the Treaty.

Sunderland advised the Cabinet that the King contemplated spending the winter abroad, but if it was necessary that Parliament should meet before Christmas, a scheme of business for the Session might be transmitted forthwith, with details of a plan for carrying it on. Walpole was despatched in all speed with the answer, and on his arrival at Göhrdt[3] sought to clear his relatives from unnecessary delay in concluding the French Treaty, taking on himself the blame of having hesitated to sign after the assurances he had been instructed to give the Ministers of the States General up to a recent date, that Great Britain would not enter into a separate alliance. He found it more difficult to mollify the wrath of his Majesty, the resentment of Stanhope, and the aversion of Sunderland, who avowed their chagrin at the refusal of the Treasury to furnish supplies requisite for the Hesse and Coburg troops in the Elector's pay, at the frustration of an active policy in the Baltic, and above all, at the suggestion without previous consultation with them that the Prince of Wales should open Parliament in person by a speech from the Throne. The contrast which would thereby have been inevitably afforded between his Royal Highness, who was now beginning to speak

[1] 11th Nov., 1716.—*MS.*
[2] 11th Nov.—*MS.*
[3] 23rd Nov.

English with tolerable fluency, and the dumb show made by his father in the House of Lords, where he was obliged to confide to the Chancellor the utterance of his suppositions and thoughts on domestic and foreign affairs, was too palpable for argument. Stanhope showed signs of relenting; protested anxiety that early friendships should not be broken; and undertook to make his personal influence conducive to the building up anew of the conjoint power in which they had hitherto borne so prominent a part. Horace Walpole seems to have misconstrued these conciliatory promises into the rescinding of what had been done, and he returned to England filled with that impression. A few days later the formal despatch arrived constituting Townshend Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and promoting Methuen, who had been acting as Stanhope's deputy, to be with him joint Secretary of State.[1]

The offer of an exchange of offices with his rival was spurned indignantly by Townshend, who in a fit of scornful rage wrote that his private affairs would not permit him to remove to Ireland, and that "common honesty would not allow him to put the profits of that employment in his pocket without going over to do the duties of it,"[2] as Sunderland for the two preceding years had done. This patriotic view was probably not shared by the person most certain to be consulted on the occasion. Lady Townshend's influence with her husband was unbounded, and was hardly less than that which she exercised over her brother. She had laughed too often with Wharton at the pageantries and orgies of Dublin Castle to wish to preside in the capacity of Vice-Queen, but she was a woman of business, loved money like all her family, and ridiculed the notion of anyone whose opinion she thought worth having appreciating the refusing of so many thousands a year on a point of mere propriety. For had not everybody in times past made a job of what was often called the first post in the kingdom, only differing in the degree of latitude which each had taken? If he persisted in sulking at Rainham, and shutting the door of the Cabinet after him, Robin would be left there alone, which in the actual state of his financial plans already above ground was what he did not choose. The effervescence of Townshend's wrath subsided when he was

[1] 24th Dec., 1716.

[2] Townshend to Slingsland, 1st Jan., 1717.

told that pertinacity in refusal would be taken to imply renunciation of Whig fealty, and of faith in Hanover. He remained, therefore, in the Cabinet as Viceroy, reserving to himself the right to stay in Norfolk as long as he thought fit, or not to go to Ireland at all. The First Lord of the Treasury bore a very characteristic part in the controversy. He was deeply mortified by the supersession of his brother-in-law, and did not shrink from upbraiding Stanhope with failure in friendship, with acting from passion, not reason, and with imputing to Cowper, Argyll, Townshend, Devonshire, and himself subversive schemes to set the Prince in the eyes of Parliament and the nation above his absent father; which Stanhope protested were groundless imaginings. He did not say what he meant himself to do, but renewed his promise to act in concert with the Cabinet as heretofore. The hardihood of the man is read in his attempt to turn the tables by suggesting that in the real secret of this strange business it was probable that Chancellor Bernsdorff and the Duchess of Munster were better informed than he could pretend to be. The Dutch Ministers were afraid that Walpole and others might resign, and that the close alliance between the two countries would be endangered; and uneasiness prevailed amongst city men acquainted with the projects of the Treasury for lessening the burthen of the Debt, lest their favourite financier might give place to someone less capable. But his brother Horace, on relinquishing his Under-Secretaryship, was made auditor of American revenues, a sinecure for life worth £800 a year; and with Townshend still beside him in the Cabinet, Walpole consented to remain.

CHAPTER IV.

STANHOPE'S FOREIGN POLICY.

1717.

Primate Wake in the Cabinet—Liberation of Jacobites—Abbé Dubois in England—Arrest of Swedish Ambassador—Minutes of Cabinet—Dismissal of Townshend—Walpole resigns—Addison Secretary of State—Newcastle in the Cabinet—Stanhope First Lord of the Treasury—Walpole's Conversion Scheme—Acquittal of Oxford—Quarrel between the Prince of Wales and Newcastle.

ON the death of Archbishop Tenison, Wake was translated from Lincoln to Canterbury, while Gibson was appointed his successor, and Hoadly was made a King's Chaplain. The new Primate came of old feudal stock, some of whom had followed the Norman Princes to the field, and others in the earlier days of the Stuarts enjoyed the distinction of baronetage and shrievalty. He was one of those who had been recommended by Burnet for a mitre for his sermons at the Rolls, and on his promotion to Lambeth he was invited to take the place of his predecessor in the Cabinet. Nor was this regarded by himself or others as merely an honorary distinction. His correspondence with Archbishop King, Bishop Nicholson and others of the Episcopate in Ireland shows how active and thoughtful was the interest he took in the politics of the Church as he understood them in both Kingdoms.

His voice in the Council and the Senate was often, if not consistently, raised against attempts to narrow the sphere of sectarian privilege. He was tardily drawn into differing with his colleagues on the repeal of the Schism Act; and he is said to have been persuaded by Nottingham to sanction the proposal of

a more rigid test of clerical subscription. But he sympathised with Synge and Berkeley in deprecating the rigour of the Penal Laws in Ireland, and in his later years he carried on an active correspondence with the Abbé Curayer at Paris with the ideas of bringing about inter-communion between the Gallican and Anglican churches. When his friend visited England he was a guest at Lambeth, was presented at Court by his host, and treated with marked attention by the Princess of Wales, who, leaning avowedly to the views of Hoadly and Samuel Clarke, encouraged in every direction the tendency to what she deemed Christian fraternisation.

To propitiate Leicester House while humouring the desire of St. James's to have the disposal of more money to meet incessant and increasing demands, the clumsy device was again resorted to of asking Parliament to vote £100,000 in addition to the Civil List, out of which his Majesty might grant from time to time whatever portion he thought fit for the maintenance and education of his grandchildren. The scheme was actually prepared without the knowledge of the Chancellor in order that he might frame a message to Parliament on the subject. The Keeper of the Great Seal set down his objections in Latin. It would certainly give rise to unseemly discussion of the needs and wishes of the Royal Family, alienate many votes from Ministers, revive contentions that were going to sleep, and practically bring about nothing but mischief at a time when the foundations of the Throne were already shaken.[1] On this unexpected demurrer the scheme was laid aside; but the resolution to be rid of so intractable a colleague became more settled than before, and for its execution opportunity alone was awaited.

The Princess, who had few other opportunities of speaking her mind to her father-in-law on public affairs, took occasion sometimes during a dull discourse when seated beside him in the curtained pew of the Chapel Royal, to say what she thought might be worthily done for a neglected friend, or in a forgotten cause. But her irreverent suggestions were unacceptable to his worried Majesty when he quitted the precincts of prayer.

In the minutes of Cabinet, on the 3rd of February, 1717, we find the name of Lord Parker, which is seldom omitted in subsequent

[1] Mem. endorsed in Lord Cowper's handwriting, 1st January, 1717.

notes of their proceedings.[1] In this way the Chief Justice, without displacing anyone, became acquainted with the confidential business of Administration, and prepared ere long for the higher position designed for him. The Duke of Kingston was given the Privy Seal; Townshend, after much hesitation, consented to kiss hands as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; Stanhope took charge of the Northern, while Methuen was appointed to the Southern Department. With these were assembled at the Cockpit the Chancellor, the Dukes of Bolton, Kent, and Roxburgh, the First Lord of the Admiralty and First Commissioner of the Treasury, while Sunderland for a time held no higher office than that of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland; the Primate, the Lord President, and the Captain-General were occasionally absent. The Secretaries of State were directed promptly to interrogate for the information of the Council, M. Maudels, the Secretary of the Swedish Minister, and to require him to remain within the surveillance of a messenger. A few days later another Cabinet directed the equipment of a Squadron without delay for the Baltic; and an embargo was laid on the export of corn.[2] Ministers abroad were directed to send with their despatches translations in French, "to be laid before the King, who did not perfectly understand the English tongue."[3]

It was the policy of the reconstituted Administration to show, as far as prudently might be, a distinctive tone of leniency towards the Jacobites. Lord Lansdowne was liberated from the Tower, and Sir W. Wyndham, summoned to appear in the King's Bench, with his bail, was discharged. Wyndham, however, lost no time in moving a resolution that Hoadly's antagonist, Dr. Snape, master of Eton, should be desired to preach before the House on the anniversary of the Restoration. Government resisted the motion, and were beaten by ten. Dubois and Stanhope were equally impatient to have the Convention between France and England completed, and Cadogan was authorised to sign it with the Abbé at the Hague without waiting for the formalities which the constitution of the United Provinces made requisite to enable the Pensionary and the Greffier to do so. Dubois was sent to England to negotiate the

[1] Record Office *MS.*

[2] Minutes of Cabinet 30th January and 3rd February, 1717.—*MSS.*

[3] Methuen to Worsley, Envoy to Portugal, 22nd January, 1717.—*MSS.*

final terms; one of the vexed questions being in what language the Treaty should be ratified. George I., as well as Louis XV., being formally designated King of France, the point was eventually waived, the competing claimants of Sovereignty agreeing to use the common diplomatic tongue; and the Treaty was finally executed on the 4th of January, 1717, the provisional Convention being then by consent destroyed to obliterate all memories of hesitation. The Regent, on learning the extensive preparations making by Alberoni for the invasion of England, sent Dubois back as Envoy Extraordinary to concert measures for its defeat. The versatile Abbé seemed fittest for the special mission, for, as he said, he knew England already, and avowedly corresponded with members of the Cabinet. His candour did not betray him into adding that he was in receipt of a pension from them; but when undertaking the task he told his Highness that he hoped the Abbé would come back a recognised Minister of France, and that he would prove able to expand the Triple Alliance so as to embrace other States of Europe. Nor was this an idle boast. During his three months' stay in London Stanhope contrived to obtain the adhesion of the Courts of Vienna and Turin, in spite of all the influence used to detach them by Russia, Sweden, and Spain.[1] Stair was a favourite guest at the Regent's revels, where Dubois was never absent, and their intimacy became closer than before. Stair's official talk bespoke the character of the man. The Abbé took him for an exemplary Scotchman who could never be entrapped into saying what he did not choose to say and never dissimulating *mal à propos;* and to his tact and temper was due his facility in extricating himself from embarrassments not of his weaving.

Dubois visited Stanhope in London and characteristically recorded his residence there.

"My sojourn in England was short and mysterious. I succeeded in serving my master better than I could have hoped. King George received me favourably, and, as a plenipotentiary, I will not put down in my journal what was said in audience in addition to documents and letters. During this visit I touched for the last time the pension I owed to English munificence. I have since ceased to have any private relations with that Government; but I own that while Louis XIV. reigned, or

[1] Memoirs of Dubois, III.

rather Mdme. de Maintenon, I regarded this money as lawful prize. The deuce take scruples."

Ministers had since October been in possession of correspondence between Baron Gortz and Count Gyllenbourg, and Baron Spaar, the Swedish Ambassador at Paris, whom Alberoni had furnished with a million livres to pay and equip the Swedish invasion of Scotland; but until the alliance with France was actually signed and sealed they hesitated to provoke an open quarrel with Charles XII.; and on his part he was equally willing to delay throwing off the mask. While exceptional measures therefore were prepared by the Secretary of State to be put in peremptory execution if necessary against the perfidious Envoy in London, nothing was actually done save by espionage until after the new Triple Alliance had been concluded. Before the meeting of Parliament, however, it was thought advisable by the Cabinet to strike a blow which, though it did not prevent the shipment of men and guns from Göttingen, might paralyse Jacobite plottings at Westminster. On the 29th of January Stanhope laid before the King in Council at St. James's proofs of Count Gyllenbourg's active complicity in treasonable designs forming in the Highlands and elsewhere, and it was ordered that measures should be forthwith taken to secure the person and papers of the Ambassador; of Sir Jacob Banks, recently M.P. for Minehead; and of Charles Cæsar, lately unseated for Hertford, believed to be engaged in treasonable proceedings with the Government of Sweden. Stanhope instructed General Wade to execute the warrant for their apprehension without delay. The same night the Embassy was surrounded by a file of Grenadiers under Colonel Blakeney, who placed M. Gyllenbourg under arrest and removed the whole of his papers to Whitehall.[1]

On the event being known the Foreign Ministers then in London demanded an audience to inquire the cause of an infraction of diplomatic inviolability so startling; and they were assured that nothing but clear evidence of direct breach of international faith would have led to such a deviation from established usage. Warrants meantime were issued for the apprehension of several other persons suspected of complicity in the design; but upon examination before the Council they were discharged, and Banks and Cæsar were admitted to bail.

[1] Secretary Methuen to Dayrolle 31st January, 1717.—*MS.*

Replies expected to Gyllenbourg's last dispatches, copies of which were found, were deemed of such importance that several ships of war were employed to intercept and search any Swedish vessels that might convey them. M. Gortz, the Swedish Premier, was on his way to England, when he learned at Calais what had been done, and returning to Holland he was arrested at Arnheim by the Dutch authorities, on a requisition from the British Government. This was a further stretch of the recognised comity of nations, which Charles XII. resented by placing Mr. Jackson, the British Minister at Stockholm, under arrest, without assigning publicly any reason in justification or protesting against the capture and detention of Gyllenbourg; but the clandestine correspondence with M. Gortz clearly disclosed the project of invasion.[1] This was printed and circulated by Government among the diplomatic representatives of all the States resident in England in justification of the proceedings, which were approved by votes of both Houses of Parliament.

The Czar contrived so to ingratiate himself with the Regent d'Orleans during a visit to Paris that a Treaty of Alliance, offensive and defensive, between France, Russia, and Prussia was secretly concluded, which, though not at variance in terms with improved relations with England, was to be kept strictly from the knowledge of her Ministers. All its provisions were, notwithstanding, communicated by Dubois, though the fact was not known in St. Petersburg till 1721, whereupon the Czar was so angry that he exclaimed that had he found any of his Ministers were privy to the disclosure he would have brought them to justice for the crime. George I., learning his vexation, wrote on the margin of the dispatch conveying the information: "he wants to impale one of his officers and seeks a pretext."

Freed from departmental reserve, Townshend spoke plainly of the King of Sweden: "His violent and intractable temper had for some years obliged the British Government to deviate from their true interest by conniving at and even contributing to the aggrandisement of the Czar and the King of Prussia, a remedy little better than the disease, and growing more dan-

[1] Secretary Methuen to Dayrolle, then Envoy to the Swiss Republic, subsequently transferred to the Hague. 21st February, 1717.—*MS.*

gerous daily in proportion as Sweden grew less so; for, notwithstanding his losses, Charles XII. was not yet reduced to such extremities as to give up all his Provinces in Germany. Whatever should be undertaken against him on the side of Finland would, by turning to the advantage of the Czar, more effectually subvert the balance of the North and render the navigation of the Baltic still more precarious, upon which account every endeavour should be used to bring the King of Sweden to reason without dispossessing him of any part of his dominions outside the Empire." If forced to renounce his claims in Germany, the Protestant Princes of the Empire need not regret it or look to other Sovereigns for support. Notwithstanding the haughty spirit of the King, Townshend thought Sweden was brought so low by loss of trade and want of provisions, that if proper means were taken to blockade her ports, Charles could not hold out against the cries of his subjects or the necessities of his army; and if he could be persuaded that England and Holland would employ their whole credit and power towards getting Finland, Ingria, and Livonia restored to him, without hopes of their ever joining with him hereafter, to preserve the balance of the North he might begin to think with patience of parting with his German Provinces, in order to secure those which were the immediate magazine and granary of Sweden. If France were suspected of feeding the ambitious dreams of Charles XII. to ensure the Maritime Alliance with Sweden against Great Britain and the States, all the more it behoved us to seek opportunities for convincing her wayward ruler that his best interests lay in our support.[1] These were wise and practical counsels, but coming from an alienated friend they were treated with mistrust and ascribed, perhaps, to a desire indirectly to guide the foreign policy he had ceased to dictate.

At a meeting of the Cabinet on the 10th March, present: the Archbishop, Chancellor, Kent, Kingston, Roxburgh, Bolton, Sunderland, Townshend, Orford, Parker, Secretaries Methuen and Stanhope, a resolution was passed "to burn, sink, or destroy all ships belonging to Sweden as might come in the way."[2] In the Privy Council on the 16th March, there being beside

[1] Townshend to Slingsland, 17th March, 1717.

[2] Minute of Cabinet, Cockpit, 10th March, 1717.—*MS.* Record Office.

members of the Cabinet, present the Duke of Montrose, the Earls of Derby, Westmoreland, Radnor, Berkeley, Torrington, and the Bishop of London, Sunderland was declared Lord President.[1] At the next meeting of the Cabinet a respite of six months was granted to the rebel Lords in custody.

The ferment created by the arrest of Gyllenbourg fully answered Ministerial expectations, but internal peace in the Cabinet did not long remain unbroken. Stanhope and Sunderland would seem to have too easily lent their sanction to jobs and exactions by the German favourites that in one form or other necessarily came before the Treasury. Walpole was not troubled with scruples about comparatively small amounts for comparatively small services; and, engrossed with important fiscal schemes as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he doubtless suffered a good many things to pass without much inquiry, and others into which he saw at a glance that inquiry had better not be made; but a limit was at length reached when he felt bound to say of my Lady Duchess or Robethon that for his own credit's sake he could no further yield to importunity. Devonshire and Townshend shared his disposition to resist, and the contagion of discontent spread through their immediate friends. Stanhope's conduct of foreign affairs had proved signally successful, and Walpole was preparing with undoubting confidence the Budget on which his fame in after times was destined conspicuously to rest. Not the less ungraciously he continued, however, to resist the incessant demands of all sorts from those who looked to Stanhope and Sunderland as the chiefs of the party in power. Sunderland's egregious self-sacrifices were still without compensation. He had deprived his hated rival of the Seals by surrendering the Viceroyalty, and he had added to the dignity and territorial influence of the Cabinet by surrendering to the Duke of Kingston the Privy Seal. The subordinate, though not unprofitable, office of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland remained, but it was not to be expected that he would long consent to occupy such a position. Meanwhile the connections and partisans of the two Ministerial factions gradually organised themselves in separate Parliamentary camps, and every vote in Supply was watched narrowly, and sometimes with misgiving, by the Treasury Bench. The First Lord spoke freely in private

[1] Minute of Privy Council, St. James's, 16th March, 1717.

against the Hanoverian policy of maintaining an increased standing army, for which there was no longer necessity or excuse; while the Secretary of State, exultant in the triumphs which the command of such a force could alone have enabled him to win, listened with impatience to suggestions of economy as unworthy and unsafe. Slumbering jealousies were unexpectedly blown into flame by an injudicious message which the King was advised to send by Stanhope on the 3rd of April to the Lower House, asking for a Vote of Credit to equip further armaments against Sweden, for the necessity of which no definite grounds were assigned, and to the scope of which no limits were annexed. Ministers, it was known, were not agreed upon the subject, and discord among their supporters raised the hopes of Opposition high. Shippen led the attack with the memorable expression that it was to be regretted their new Sovereign "was as little acquainted with the forms and usages of Parliament as with the language of the country." Had it not been so, he would never have authorised such a message—so unparliamentary, and without precedent. But perhaps it had been conceived by some foreign Minister, and ill-translated into English. If recent successes in diplomacy were owing to the liberal use of English money, they might reasonably fear its repetition; for foreigners once tasting the advantages of our friendship would certainly not fail to come again, and their adhesion to our interest would last only as long as we continued to supply their needs. Both he and Hungerford dwelt on the irregularity of asking the House for a pledge in Supply without a previous estimate or demonstration in detail of its necessity. Stanhope could only say that the King was too upright and patriotic to misuse what might be granted him for the external safety of the realm, and that none could refuse what he asked but those who distrusted the integrity of his responsible advisers. Lawson replied that were such notions to prevail they had better retire to their country seats, and leave the Court and Cabinet to take what they chose of the people's substance, and spend it as they pleased. The debate grew warm, Grimston and other Whigs openly dissenting from the Motion, while Walpole observed an ominous silence. Papers were demanded which could not well be refused, and the discussion stood over for a week. Meanwhile it became known that many would not vote

at all, while others were undecided. The First Lord of the Treasury supported the Vote on the second debate, but more circumspectly and guardedly than his colleagues, Aislabie and Craggs; while the Speaker, being out of the Chair, strongly deprecated the departure from established usage and principle which had been proposed. In a House of 313, the Vote was carried by fifteen only, while on the Report the majority dwindled to four. In the minority well-known adherents of Townshend were found, and several others were absent. This was taken as indicating an open breach, and Stanhope, a few hours later, wrote to acquaint the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland that the Crown had no longer occasion for his services. Next morning Walpole asked an audience, and delivered up the Seals. The King handed them back to him, saying he could not accept his resignation. A long conversation ensued, the loss of such a Finance Minister being fervently deprecated by his Majesty, while Walpole declared the impossibility of his continuing to endorse the demands forced upon him by the unworthy recommendation of official rivals. Repeatedly the King gave back the Seals, but at length Walpole laid them on the table and withdrew, betraying by his manner as he left the Palace his agitation during the scene. Devonshire, Orford, Methuen, and Pulteney thereupon also resigned, and but four of the original Cabinet of October, 1714, remained.

Stanhope was made First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sunderland and Addison Secretaries of State, and Berkeley First Lord of the Admiralty. No exception could be taken to these appointments as not sufficiently Whig, but not even party prejudice could affect to treat them as equal in weight or influence. Stanhope's integrity was not questioned, but his discernment and discretion in financial affairs few were hardy enough to avouch. Sunderland, after ten years, regained the direction of Foreign Affairs, and for a time no substantial change was observable in the policy recently pursued. The disposal of other high offices stood clear of any suspicion of mere desert or merit.

The young Duke of Newcastle had lately married Lady Henrietta Godolphin, grand-daughter of Marlborough and of the not yet forgotten friend and comrade who with him had "sounded all the depths and shoals of honour" in the reigns of

William and Anne. A few days after room was found in the Cabinet for his inexperienced but opulent Grace, the gold key of Chamberlain being given him, while the Duke of Bolton became Viceroy of Ireland. How little qualified either proved for the duties he was set to discharge it took but brief space to disclose; but both were owners in fee of many boroughs whose legislative tenants-at-will it was desirable to secure. Bolton had had the means of acquiring experience in Irish affairs, having been for a time one of the Lords Justices, and this was probably thought a sufficient excuse for committing the fate of that troubled land to the head of the House of Poulett.

Various motives conduced in the mind of Sunderland to the nomination of Addison as Secretary of State. His love of letters and genuine enjoyment of sympathetic talk with him about books was perhaps the least influential, and in the critical circumstances of the hour, others were inevitably uppermost in such a nature. He coveted the control without the possession of the second Seal of State, and he knew only too well the inexhaustible amenability of his friend; nor can it be doubted that in his insatiable love of domination he wished to show the haughtiest of his own order that when he chose he could do without them.

Halifax had recommended Godolphin to retain the political services of Addison when still a very young man for the due celebration of the victory of Blenheim, and the Treasurer was so much pleased that he named him successor to Locke, as Commissioner of Appeals. From this petty place he was advanced to that of Under Secretary of State in 1706, under Sir Charles Hedges, and subsequently under Lord Sunderland. He went as Chief Secretary to Ireland with Wharton. The real business of the department was performed by Southwell, who had succeeded his father in the permanent office of Irish Secretary, designated when first conferred by William III. as Irish Secretary of State, but which gradually shed its inappropriate plumage as it came to maturity and usefulness. Edward Southwell had recently been one of the three Commissioners to whom the charge of the Privy Seal was left by Sunderland when he went abroad, and from the manner in which he is named, it is obvious that the apocryphal title of Secretary of State had become obsolete. For a long series of years the correspondence between Whitehall and the Castle was conducted by members

of the family, who, having landed property in Cork and Limerick, gladly spent a portion of each year in Ireland, and during the residue dated their letters from St. James's Street or Spring Gardens. The emoluments of the Chief Secretaryship in Addison's time and for some years after were not £1,000 a year, and the office seems to have ranked among the third or fourth classes of political appointments given to men whom it was thought desirable to initiate into public business, and whose 'prentice blunders could not much signify. The other profits of the office arose chiefly from fees, so small that Addison did not think it worth while exempting personal friends from their payment; and he was glad to accept the supplementary place of Keeper of the Records in Birmingham Tower, Dublin Castle, at a salary of £300 a year. On the change of Administration in 1710, he resumed his pen, and besides his matchless essays, produced his well-known tragedy of *Cato*. He was nominated Secretary to the Regency on the death of Queen Anne, and Chief Secretary for Ireland a second time. Too much given at all times to walk in the shadow of rank and state, he at length persuaded himself that were his home for life a great historic mansion, and were he the husband of a countess-dowager, he might come to be reckoned at last as one of the Sanhedrim who were henceforth to rule in Israel. That the mastership of Holland House tended to his political advancement his literary rivals did not doubt, but that his nuptials with the old Lady Warwick contributed to his happiness, Lady Mary Wortley Montague may be excused for disbelieving.

For some years he had been a favoured guest at Holland House, where he became tutor to the youthful Earl. As he advanced in political or literary fame, the lady's consciousness of her power to fascinate or lead the fashion was thought to have declined, but when opposing partisans vied with one another in praise of *Cato*, and the anonymous *Spectator* was likely to become a Right Honourable gentleman, incompatibility hitherto insuperable seemed to fade away, and Addison's ambition beguiled him into imagining it would be said, perhaps even thought, that he as well as the lady was marrying for love. Sunderland wanted two votes in the Cabinet, and knowing the fitness of the man for Ministerial cypherhood, he insisted on his being Secretary of State. The Northern Department was

assigned to him, and he took the oath of an English Privy Councillor on the 15th of April.[1]

The office was ill suited to a man of his temperament in such times—perhaps in any times. He had no argumentative readiness in debate, and had so much *mauvaise honte* as often to show a certain embarrassment in conversation with strangers. Had there been any real appreciation of his specific ability and worth he would not have been thrust into a situation so ill-suited to him, and in which his want of success was so easily turned to account as a pretended proof of deficiency in men of his class. They might as well have offered him a cavalry command, or a Regius Professorship of Divinity, a position he was banteringly said to have sometimes coveted. Morally and intellectually, he was singularly ill-qualified for the rough work of political warfare at a period when party spirit ran so high. His mind was essentially judicial in its graver and playful in its lighter moods. Even in his satire, glittering though it was with point, the aim hardly ever seems to be directed by passion or the wish to wound. His judgments are in general impartially just even upon opponents, his jests at their expense seldom or never damaging or humiliating. To take such a man for a partisan chief when neither side gave quarter, and the overthrow of a Ministry frequently implied their impeachment, was only another proof of the utter disregard of practical fitness for office that was habitual with those in power. But Sunderland's forbearance, as he deemed it, was spent; and he resolved to enjoy to the full the power so long deferred. He was First Minister, and he would be sole Secretary of State. But this was only possible by his nominating as his colleague one who would always reflect his opinions, and do as he would have done. Among his Peers it might not have been easy to find one equally pliant. He looked out of the window of privilege, and his eye fell upon Addison. He had known him before in subordinate place, and felt that his flexibility in opinions and plausibility of speech fitted him above stronger men for the post. Had he possessed the political qualities without which no man ought to be made a Secretary of State, Sunderland would never have thought of him. So thoroughly was this understood by those who were near enough to appreciate correctly acts and motives, that it be-

[1] Minute of Council, 16th April, 1717.—*MS.*

came usual among politicians to speak of Addison as Sunderland's man.

There were many public trusts of consequence which Addison would have exemplarily filled, not a few offices that would have been dignified by his name. But in a long life of literary distinction none such was ever offered him. Why should it have been? That would have been an act of mere justice, the acquittance of an equitable debt from the public to one who had served it well, the recognition in an honourable form of a national obligation. These considerations, however, never occurred probably to the Government of the day, or if they did they were disregarded as fantastic and sentimental. The question was not how Addison should be rewarded, but how he should be used. He was, therefore, beguiled into taking the part of *domino* in the State Mask, and left to the bitterness of disappointment when the requirements of the scene changed.

Stanhope, unhappily for his fame and self-content, took Walpole's place at the Treasury, with whose infinite details of business he was wholly unacquainted, restoring at last to Sunderland the portfolio he had been deprived of ten years before. On Aislabie, Addison and Craggs, with the aid of the Attorney-General, Northey, devolved the business in Supply; while the new First Lord was compelled to rely on the popularity he had already earned as a truthful and courageous leader of the House. Though often swayed by impulse to outrun his deliberate meaning, and forced by the candour and justice of his nature to retrieve an error, he preferred to do so in phraseology rather than in sentiment. On taking office he was nettled by a retiring sarcasm of his predecessor into a too effusive protestation that he meant to make up a want of experience and versatility in business by devoting to the work of his department energies undivided by any thought of serving private interests at its expense, or burthening the already heavy-weighted resources of the country with pensions or reversions. Walpole, stung by the cheer that fitted the taunt to his notorious facility in permitting such practices, coolly undertook to explain literally what the allusion meant. It was true, he said, that he had often been asked to sanction the transfer of valuable claims, it might be for valuable consideration. Sometimes he judged the terms of transfer reasonable, and gave them his assent, sometimes he thought them the contrary and

refused. An impertinent fellow named Robethon, who, it was well known, hung about the Court, had lately asked his permission to assign a pension to his son, who was still a very young man, and without any pretensions of his own; and upon his being refused, had the insolence to demand from the Treasury the sum of £2,500 as compensation for the loss of its sale in the market. This, said Walpole, I thought it my duty to decline, and that I should do better by assigning the reversion to my own son.[1] Stanhope's only rejoinder was characteristically weak—that he was in no danger of being led astray, as he had neither son nor brother to provide for.

Walpole took no common pains to show, without a faltering or resentful word, how much the State had lost by his withdrawal. Before quitting office he had matured measures of fiscal and financial reform not wholly without precedents, but greatly enlarged from what had been done by Godolphin and Harley. On the day that he resigned he took his seat as usual with other Privy Councillors on the right hand of the Chair, and conformably with the notice which stood in his name, he rose to expound the schemes for the reduction of interest and the liberation of commerce from vexatious impediments, which, in his capacity as an independent Member of the House, he now presented to his successor, with the hope that he might carry them to perfection.

He proposed to pawn the House Tax with the Bank of England for the purpose of liquidating four millions and a half of National Debt by converting the securities on which it was held at six and seven per cent. into a charge on the Exchequer bearing five per cent. only until it should be paid off. This charge was given in varied forms of securities which no future Board of Treasury might repudiate or alter without consent of Parliament. Some of these were annuities negotiable by bearer; and the inducement to the Bank seems to have been in some degree the complimentary terms in which the title of the Bill and its preamble proclaimed the measure to be one for enlarging the capital of that great and growing establishment.

Walpole, who knew its joint-stock feelings *intus et in cute*, understood exactly what would stimulate its ambition, and how far it was safe to play with it a new game of finance. To say that it was an improvident experiment, without knowing ex-

[1] Chandler's Debates.

aptly the pulse of the money market at the time, would be idle; and to take for gospel the credulous applause with which the project was received would be little better. The worst of it was that it drew his unwary successors in office to imitate and expand the example he had set, and led them by degrees whither they knew not.[1] By another Act a similar transaction was authorised with the South Sea Company, to whom as security the specific revenues under the 9th of Anne were pledged until the advance should be redeemed. These enactments essentially differed from that of Harley in 1711, and had vaster operations not been undertaken by Aislabie on the pretence of adhering to that model, the fatal consequences to all concerned might have been for a longer space averted.

The relief offered to trade by Walpole in the remission of duties on raw materials imported, and various vexatious imposts in the form of customs, attracted less notice at such a time in an assembly of lawyers, soldiers, and younger sons; but the outgoing Minister's public spirit was extolled as equalled only by his rare perspicacity in dealing with practical affairs; and having, as he felt, built for himself a legislative monument *ære perennius*, he soon began to think that he might amuse if not avenge himself on the colleagues he had left behind. Personally he had no quarrel with any of them; and politically all of them were sincerely anxious not further to estrange him. But the position was not easy to be either maintained or explained; and being ambiguous, the old friends gradually widened from one another, till they became open adversaries. Walpole was overmatched in all that related to war and finance, not merely in accurate knowledge, but in readiness and vigour in debate. The bulk of the country gentlemen, whatever their party leanings, were of opinion no plausibilities could move, that he understood better than all of them put together what was best to be done with the public resources, and how to do it. On one occasion when Government asked for a vote of £130,000 for "exceedings on the Army Estimate" and the Jacobite Opposition proposed to cut it down to £80,000, the strong man, with recollections of the past and anticipations of the future, dictated a compromise at £99,000, which the House meekly ratified. On another occasion, when an Address to the Crown offered thanks for the completion of

[1] 3rd George I., chap. 9.

the Quadruple Treaty, and other Conventions appendent thereto, Walpole declared that having been a party to their elaboration he had no doubt they were all for the welfare of the country; but he could not, therefore, agree that the House, for the first time in its history, should approve what it had not read; and he made it, consequently, defer its thanks until it had opportunity to judge by copies laid upon the table.[1] He likewise challenged brusquely the necessity of keeping up the regular forces on land to the strength he had hitherto stoutly vindicated; but he was entitled to plead in justification for this change of front that the confirmation of peace with France made all the difference in the number of rank and file requisite for the defence of the realm, and that the discomfiture of Gyllenbourg's intrigues rendered apprehensions for the stability of domestic peace less believable than when he professed officially to share them.

Stanhope became irritable, perplexed, and at last miserable, in his false position, used as he had been to the never-failing sympathy and support of his old friend, who now, with sardonic look and tone, made it a point of seizing every opportunity for teaching him how little he knew of his unaccustomed business; and how much quicker and better it could be done another way. In the course of July he told Sunderland he could stand it no longer, and he was accordingly suffered to make his escape to the Upper House, where his excellent qualities were fully appreciated, and where, even in answering questions regarding foreign affairs, he was readier and infinitely more agreeable than Sunderland. The Earl wanted to be head of Administration and would be content with nothing less. Prime Minister was a phrase of compliment occasionally bestowed in conversation or private correspondence, but for which there was no official warrant or continuing usage. There can be no doubt that Marlborough was *primus inter pares* from the accession of Queen Anne until the dismissal of Godolphin; but the fame, power, and fortune of his Captain-Generalship caused every civil epithet to pale in its exceeding light; while the *Gazette* and *Almanack* seemed rather to believe in the Lord-Treasurer's being First Minister of the day. When a century had passed and prejudices had withered away, the man who alone history thinks worthy of compare with Marlborough pronounced, in

[1] Chandler's Debates.

terms that ought not to be forgotten, the difference between the position of a British General serving abroad under the control of Ministers at home and dependent from day to day on their discretion, and that of one who was practically his own master, whose decisions were never questioned, and whose requisitions were never withheld.

Asked in confidence to compare candidly Churchill's military career with his own, Wellington paid a noble tribute to the genius, patience, and generalship of his illustrious prototype; and uttered not a hint of preference for him who had fought his way from Torres Vedras to Waterloo. He was justified in adding, on his own behalf, that the difficulties he had to contend with throughout, from frequent lack of prompt and adequate support from home, were practically unknown to Marlborough—"for he was himself the Government." [1]

The Commission of Treasury consisted of Stanhope, created a Viscount, Aislabie Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Torrington, John Wallop, George Baillie, and Thomas Micklethwayte, Junior Lords; but there was not among them a hand firm enough to defeat the jobs of friends, or the importunities of speculators.

To the surprise and chagrin of many who were called his betters, the younger Craggs was made Secretary-at-War. The older Craggs remained Postmaster-General, and thus it was plain that Sunderland, in the pride of exaltation, did not deign to disguise his resolution to grasp predominant power. With Marlborough's growing infirmity of memory and decision, it was of no little consequence to have in the War Department one who was equally trusted by him, and by his ambitious son-in-law. The archives are full of proofs how punctually and perfunctorily Craggs filled his office; and how dutifully he acquainted the future master of his fortunes with what was doing.[2] Steele and Tickle looked to their old friend in advancement, and the former was jealous of the latter being given an Under-Secretaryship, for which, indeed, he was the better qualified of the two. He was subsequently made Secretary to the Lords Justices in Ireland, a place which he retained till his death.

[1] Conversations with the Duke of Wellington and Lord Mahon.

[2] State Papers, 1718.—*MS.* Record Office.

Aislabie, left too much to himself at the Exchequer, proposed an improvident bargain with the South Sea Company, having about it the look of a copy from the precedent left behind by Walpole. But the consummate artist is never taken in by a showy imitation of his work. The ex-First Lord pounced upon the unhappy imposture. High words ensued; hands were laid on scabbards, and the Speaker bound the belligerents over to keep the peace.

The victor of Blenheim had gradually ceased to be an object of personal jealousy or of party suspicion. The chill of old age crept over him. In all duties of his office still unremitting, he showed in private life symptoms of decay, even in the equanimity that had been one of his most marked characteristics. Phlegm, like frost, gives soonest in the genial air; and the great soldier, whose countenance and temper were unruffled in the shock of battle and amid the gusts of popular ingratitude, betrayed now and then signs of disobedience to the mastery of will that so long had made men marvel. To strangers he was still urbanity and courtesy personified; to the woman he worshipped he was still yielding and tender; but, like the strong man of old—

> "He found his general spirits droop,
> His hopes all flat,
> Nature within him weary of herself:
> His race of glory run."

He seemed unable to contain a fretfulness in trifles and capricious prejudice with respect to his surroundings. "He was tired of St. Albans in one day, and fancied he would be better at Windsor Lodge, but found it impossible to get out, the weather was so bad," and Sarah adds in writing to a friend she wished to visit them, "he would be much the better for company sometimes."[1] As yet no indication of official incapacity was noticeable. He was methodical and punctual in discharge of all his regular duties, and he attended the Court, the Cabinet, and the House of Lords. But in the changes and cabals of the new reign his name occurs less and less frequently, and by degrees at length it drops out altogether. Both his sons-in-law, both his grandsons by marriage, and his favourite chief of the staff were in prominent places; the house in Pall Mall was worthier the name of

[1] To Mr. Jennings, 17th May, 1717.

palace than the old brick hospital of St. Jacques next door. In fact, he had offered the King the use of it till St. James's could be made fitter for a Royal habitation. Blenheim with its galleries and gardens, unequalled in their time, approached completion. But the light of triumph in the veteran's eye grew dim. There was no more to feign or fight for. He loved his daughters more than their mother loved them. He knew that his honours and possessions would pass in reversion to their children, but the hope of his noon-tide had perished in the grave of his only son. Still, he clung to life till life at last began to fail in him. There was no sign of faintness in the partner of his signal fortune. Sarah treated his recognition as indispensable on the death of Anne, as mere retribution made by national justice which implied no special obligation of gratitude or good humour. George I. tried to be gracious to the Duke, but for his imperious and cynical wife he could not conceal his dislike, and she was not one to hide her spite under a bushel. Keeping up to the world a fair show of decorum, she made no secret with her intimates of what she thought of Mesdames Schuylenberg and de Platen. Addison notes in his minute of the Cabinet on the 31st May the presence of the Archbishop, the Dukes of Kent, Roxburgh, Newcastle, the Lord Chancellor, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Sunderland, and himself. Marlborough, Parker, Devonshire, Bolton, Stanhope, and Berkeley seem to have been absent. A few days after Sunderland called another meeting at the Cockpit, when Marlborough and Bolton were present. A grave question, held unrighteously in suspense too long, pressed for decision.[1]

Oxford lingered in the Tower, but the Attorney-General had failed to discover any proof against him of high treason, and the Cabinet tardily came to the conclusion that "the charge should be dropped, there was not sufficient evidence to convict him of that crime, but that he should be pushed with all possible vigour on the point of misdemeanour."[2] On this confession of expediency rather than of lenity, attempts have been made to exonerate Walpole from the authorship of the capital charge as originally framed.[3] But the violence of his language in the Report

[1] *MS.* Record Office.

[2] Townshend to Stanhope, at Göhrdt, 2nd Nov., 1716.

[3] Coxe and Stanhope.

of the Secret Committee, his reckless use of uncorroborated assertions, and his advice that general presumption should be substituted for specific proof, confute the notion of his having yielded to the impulses of magnanimity or mercy. The Earl was at length brought to trial by his peers. After two years of plots discovered, revolts suppressed, correspondence ransacked, and confessions made to escape the gallows, Ministers had obtained no evidence to convict their fallen rival. All they could hope for was to obtain judgment against him on the minor articles of misdemeanour, and with these they proposed to proceed. Coningsby was eager and unabashed, as when in the Commons he sought to avenge his losses under the Resumption Act carried by Harley. Room was seldom found for men of his sort in the Cabinet, and his reward was a coronet with the unusual remainder to a favourite daughter by a second wife, though sons by a former marriage, and grandsons were living. Ex-Chancellor Harcourt interposed on behalf of his former colleague with the objection that it was unfair to the accused to hold a capital accusation over his head if it were not meant to press it, and that in that case he had a right to claim readmission within the bar as a peer, instead of being arraigned as a felon. On the other hand, if a capital charge should be made good, it would involve the loss of estate and life, and, therefore, to proceed for the penalties of misdemeanour would be a cruel mockery and waste of time. The Peers withdrew to deliberate, and there arose in chamber a long and warm debate, ending in the admission of the accused. Oxford defended himself with dignity and courage; there were many differences irrespective of party among his judges, and the whole proceeding eventually broke down on certain points of privilege between the two Houses.[1]

Ministers wished to bring to an end the criminal proceedings which continued to overcrowd many of the gaols with obscure participators in impulsive or implied sedition. Sunderland, once so inexorable in political severity, had learned the prudence, if not the humanity, of milder means of rule. The public temper had relented with the assurance of peace, and, except in cases of theological acrimony, juries were found less willing than formerly to find verdicts that might entail crushing penalties.

[1] Lords' Journals, June, 1717.

Even writers on the side of the Government instinctively pleaded in favour of leniency, and journals formerly blamed as wanting in loyalty did not scruple to remonstrate against aimless rigour. Nevertheless, at a meeting of Council, the Primate, Lord Chancellor, Roxburgh, Kent, Newcastle, Kingston, Berkeley, Sunderland, Stanhope, and Parker being present, seven persons capitally condemned prayed for reprieve, of whom one was transported for life and the others left for execution.[1] There remained in the Fleet above sixty prisoners for treason awaiting trial, who, having been arrested under warrant of the Secretary of State, might now be discharged. In Chester Castle there lingered 194 sufferers for the late rebellion, who it was thought might safely be set free.[2] Matthew Prior was detained long in custody without being brought to trial, and he was at length liberated without being subjected to any definite charge. Oxford gave him Down Hall, a pleasant residence in Essex, where he spent the rest of his days.

The last act of the Session of 1717 was that of free pardon to the partisans of the Pretender, in the grace of which the Earl of Carnwarth, the Lords Widdrington, Nairn, and seventeen other gentlemen shared. In the list were found the names of Oxford, Harcourt, Prior, and Thomas Harley, besides every person of the name and clan of Macgregor. Yet no past attainder was reversed, nor any forfeited estate restored. These produced a yearly income in Scotland of about £30,000 and in England of £48,000.

The temper of the new system of rule is indicated by the frequent exercise of criminal appeal to the Cabinet superseding the old practice of the Crown being advised by a single Minister. Sunderland, not choosing to affront the self-importance of his colleagues, possibly not caring to load his name with the reproach of rigour, summoned the heads of department within reach, to consider what should be done with the prisoners awaiting their fate for ordinary crimes. Of fifteen, six were ordered to be transported, a respite was granted to one, and eight were left for execution.[3] The Lord President was Minister in attendance on his Majesty to Cambridge and Newmarket, whence orders were

[1] Minute of Council, 19th June, 1717.—*MS.* Record Office.
[2] July, 1717.—*MS.* Record Office.
[3] Minute of Cabinet at Hampton Court, 26th September, 1717.—*MS.*

sent for an important meeting of the Privy Council at Hampton Court, to which care should be taken that the Primate, Chancellor, and other Members should be summoned,[1] and the Law Officers directed to attend.

Sunderland, writing to the Duke of Grafton, informed him that, the King having reason to dispose of his employment as Gentleman of the Bedchamber, his Majesty had no longer any occasion for his services. "I am exceedingly concerned to be obliged to write to you upon such an occasion, having always been very much your servant, and having had opportunities of showing it which were not in any other body's way. When you return to town I shall wait upon you to talk more upon this subject."[2] Nor were these empty professions, as events in due time proved.

Much of the correspondence of the department continued to devolve on Under-Secretary Tilson, by whose intelligence and assiduity it was well served. He had been trained to administrative work in William's reign and to official adaptability in that of the Queen. He had learned how to live easily, and to serve efficiently with whatever party chief happened to occupy the principal arm-chair, and how to keep well personally with the knowing and reliable men in other departments who exercised functions like his own, one of the most valuable of which consisted in not letting a careless or idle chief omit to answer prudently disagreeable letters. The Executive knack of judiciously saying nothing at considerable length, with a certain air of good-nature and sympathy, was then, as now, regarded as a gift of governing genius whereby men of his kind were born to make their way. By degrees there arose under the system of government by Cabinet the practice of circulating confidential papers; the shaping of which as Returns, Instructions, or Correspondence, was the business of Under-Secretaries. Tilson writes from Hampton Court, sending back the last papers and documents Delafaye had sent him, and the letters and instructions that had been signed. A letter to the High Sheriff of Essex was sent by a man on horse-back, booted and spurred, to save a man's life, who would otherwise have been hanged next day. "This was an act

[1] Tilson to Delafaye, 5th October, 1717.—*MS.*
[2] 18th July, 1717.—*MS.* Record Office.

of mercy, but if the pardon came in time the man promised the fees should be paid."[1]

Delafaye suggested what papers might be sent, directed generally to the clerks of the office, and others to him personally, to be opened by his deputy, Mr. Wace, "for he did not think it decent that any clerk but he should open letters" relating to the Archbishop or the King of Poland.[2]

Sometimes when Sunderland wanted to have a Cabinet at Hampton Court the only Members in town were Cowper, Kent, Stanhope, and Newcastle. The younger Craggs, who affected airs of familiarity with his high-born acquaintances, told his brand-new Grace that he was sadly wanted in town, but that he believed "the only way to bring him there was to let him remain ignorant of all occurrences. Therefore he would not tell him some very curious ones, but, being good-natured, he could not help sending him an account of some he did not deserve."[3] Sunderland, however, would have his own way, and his colleagues did not choose to thwart him. Delafaye thought the Chancellor "did not like these evening Cabinets because he had no place to lie at, his lodgings at the Palace not yet being fitted up, but he would not omit to attend."[4]

The members of the Cabinet in or near town met occasionally. On the 4th September there were present: Archbishop Wake, the Lord President, the Chancellor, Kent, Roxburgh, Berkeley, Stanhope, and Addison. It would appear from the correspondence that Sunderland lived much at Hampton Court, where he probably preferred the duty of attendance on his Majesty to suffering any of his colleagues to monopolise that means of influence. Was the aid of Carteret made available by him in gaining and keeping, from day to day, the Royal attention? It is only certain that the youthful politician rapidly became a favourite, not only by his colloquial facility in his Majesty's native tongue, but by the diligence with which he secured the sort of information regarding foreign Courts which, except Stanhope and Cadogan, there was nobody just then able to supply. George I. loved chaff, broad jest, ludicrous recitals, and scandal.

[1] To Delafaye, 8th August, 1717.—*MS.*
[2] To Tilson, 8th August, 1717.—*MS.*
[3] 1st September, 1717.—*MS.*
[4] To Tilson, 9th August, 1717.—*MS.*

Statesmanship, clothed with a little brief authority (or with a little too much, as his Majesty sometimes thought), could not unbend to these longings, and if it would, did not know how. It was delightful, therefore, to have a Lord-in-Waiting who, without preface or pretension, apology or blush, could, for the moment, make the expatriated Elector forget that he was not at home. This, in German, came easy to Carteret; and so long as he was content, under his sagacious mother's advice, to be useful and available *officieusement* his jealous chief observed with satisfaction the play of his versatile faculties thus subordinately exercised.

Stanhope was for some time too unwell to attend to business, and his official correspondence devolved upon his colleague for the Northern Department. Important instructions (not, we may be sure, without full consultation with Sunderland) were forwarded by Craggs to Cadogan when acting as plenipotentiary at Vienna, where he appears to have effectively presented the views of his Government.[1]

The sadness of the Duchess at the visibly declining health of Marlborough was in no small degree assuaged by the triumph of her ambitious son-in-law. Though more than ever difficult to consult with confidentially on questions involving personal prejudice or predilection, Sarah was too thoroughly imbued with the policy and expediency of statesmanship to insist on non-essential differences of opinion. But as time went on and the inebriation of success became complete it was not perhaps in human nature that Sunderland should not betray a sense of independence of advice. Even in his frequent visits to Holywell he carefully forgot to speak of subjects that he instinctively feared might lead to disagreement; but at last he was forced to make a communication which he foresaw was not likely to be welcome, and from which the first beginning of alienation arose. For sometime a widower, he had offered his hand to the young and beautiful Judith Tichborne, a niece of Lord Ferrard, and daughter of a Wiltshire squire of old family, but moderate estate, and they were married before the close of the year. His ancestral property being settled on his children by Lady Anne Churchill, he was left without means of providing for any future issue. His house in Piccadilly, opposite St. James's Church, not

[1] Craggs to Delafaye, 24th Oct., 1717.—*MS.*

being large enough for his increasing collection of rare books, he bought the adjoining mansions of Sir John Clarges and Lady Denbigh, which overlooked Burlington Gardens, and of the three formed the stately residence of which the glory was the library, said to have been, Harley's excepted, the noblest in the capital. Who shall tell how many tranquil and happy hours were spent with Addison there? For years he had been engaged in the multiplication of classical and mediæval treasures. Harley and he had been throughout rival bidders for their possession, and more than once his balance at his banker's had been low in consequence. On one occasion, when purchases by his agents abroad, and losses at deep play at White's, had made him feel the pinch of actual necessity, he is said to have offered as security for ten thousand pounds to his business-like mother-in-law, a certain portion of his literary possessions, and the transaction has been mistaken for the sale and transfer of his vast collection to the Lady of Blenheim. It is clear from Strype's[1] edition of Stow's "Survey of London," that the undepleted jewel-house of antique MSS., illustrated chronicles, and primitive printing was still in his day almost unique for spaciousness and diversity of contents, valued as he said at thirty thousand pounds. When in the fulness of time his descendants inherited Marlborough House, and no longer needed the grey and stately mansion within high gates in Piccadilly, it was sold to Henry Fox, and re-built for him by Sir W. Chambers, while its most valuable contents were transferred to Blenheim.

Chief Justice King did not cease to be in private a party man when he put on the ermine. Beeralston, with permission of the Drakes, was given to old Horace Walpole; and when in 1717 an office of which he had the reversion fell in, vacating thereby his seat, Sir Robert wrote to Sir Peter pressing urgently for his brother's re-nomination. It was in the midst of the struggle for ascendancy for power between him and Sunderland; votes in the Lower House were of consequence, and some delay in answering his letter caused him to fear that the Chief Justice was ready to play into the hands of his competitor. What made the matter more serious was, that several other western boroughs were believed to be at Sir Peter's disposal; and though he did not hold any of them as his property, he was allowed to dispose of them

[1] Published 1734.

pretty much as he listed. Walpole grew anxious, and indited another epistle admitting the critical position of Ministerial affairs, and the chagrin his brother's exclusion would cause him. "After I have expressed myself thus plainly and earnestly to you, I can add nothing but to tell you that as I am sure this depends upon you alone, to you alone I will ever own the obligation, which you may plainly see I do really think as great as you can possibly confer upon me; and if, after this, I should ever be wanting to show you a just sense of it, I should be worthy of the last reproach."[1] But King decided to return Edward Carteret, the friend of Sunderland. Horace Walpole was obliged to wait for a seat until twelve months later, when the death of Sir James Bateman caused a vacancy at East Looe.

When Parliament reassembled, Opposition commented harshly on the terms of the Speech from the Throne regarding German affairs; and no formal notice having been taken of Shippen's language in a previous debate reflecting on the unacquaintance of the King with Parliamentary usage and language, he indulged in renewed sarcasm, denoting that the Speech framed for him by his Ministers was more suitable for the meridian of Germany than for that of England, and that its tenour was highly unconstitutional. For these and similar expressions he was sent to the Tower, where he remained without being brought to trial or asking to be heard at the Bar, until the close of the Session. Walpole would have given him an opportunity of qualifying or retracting what he said, but the unbending Jacobite disdained to make any amends, and preferred being known in the character of a martyr.

If his Majesty wanted pecuniary favours for his German adherents, why should not his Majesty's masters provide for theirs at the public expense as well—or ill? His signature to the patent in each case could not well be refused when their support was as necessary in turn. Chief Justice Parker had a paternal wish to provide for his son in a substantial and permanent way, and he saw nothing better than a reversion of the Clerkship of the Pells, lately conferred on the Duke of Newcastle's brother, a young officer on half-pay. Lord Parker wrote, asking Mr. Pelham (whom he doubtless foresaw was meant for greater things) "If he would be pleased to let Mr.

[1] Lord Campbell's "Life of King."

Parker be joined with him in the office now, but so as he should have all the profits during his life. He believed both these points would be secured, so that he would receive no loss, and that his son would have an advantage greater indeed, if he lived long enough to survive Captain Pelham; but though he should not (and, indeed, he was not of a strong constitution), yet still there would be some benefit even from the bare expectation of survivorship. He was the more persuaded that he should prevail in this request when he reflected that his Grace the Lord Chamberlain had done him the honour to join it in favour of one who had zealously, and not altogether unsuccessfully, served his Majesty's Protestant succession."[1] The burthen of Issachar was light compared to that which Protestantism had to bear in these days from its hard drivers.

The King's distrust of his eldest son had not abated with the termination of the Regency; and there were not a few on either side who lent their aid to fan the family feud. No rupture took place, indeed, until on the request of his Royal Highness that his uncle, the Duke of York, should be named as godfather to his youngest son, the King, in a fit of unaccountable caprice, declared that the Lord Chamberlain should stand sponsor. When the ceremony was over, the Prince, addressing Newcastle, exclaimed: "You rascal, I'll fight you," of which his Grace complained to the King.[2] Sunderland refused to take passively the affront put upon his pretentious relative, who, left to himself, would probably not have had the spirit to resign the White Staff; but, although no meeting of the Cabinet was called on the occasion, the Dukes of Roxburgh, Kingston, and Kent were sent for an explanation of the Prince's language, and to obtain something in the shape of an apology. His Royal Highness peremptorily refused, and rather exacerbated the injury by declaring that he had not threatened to fight his Grace, but that he had told him he would "find him in time, for having had the presumption to stand godfather to his son against his inclination." Roxburgh

[1] Chief Justice Parker to Mr. Pelham, 22nd October, 1717.—*Macclesfield Papers, MS.* in British Museum.

[2] Memorandum in Dela'aye's handwriting, 29th November, 1717.—*MS.* Record Office.

assured him that the Lord Chamberlain had asked to be excused from standing sponsor, but had been commanded by the King. The Prince rejoined that he would not take his word for it, whereupon the Secretary for Scotland asked to be relieved from being the bearer of any further communications, and the Chancellor was sent in his stead with their Graces of Kent and Kingston as bearers of the Royal mandate confining his Royal Highness to his apartments,[1] George I. being determined, he said, to show that he was master in his own family.[2] His Majesty was thus in the singular position of having both his wife and his eldest son in his custody. In the course of the following week the Prince and his family were directed to quit St. James's, and the wrath of the King overflowed on all members of the young Court, none of whom could be suffered to remain in the Royal household. Sunderland was directed to acquaint the Dukes of St. Albans, Montagu, and Bolton, the Chancellor, and others that their ladies were expected to resign incompatible positions;[3] and the Captain-General was requested to withhold any guard of honour from the Prince or Princess of Wales.[4] The quarrel ran so high that the Lord-in-Waiting was desired not to ask Townshend or Walpole to dinner at Newmarket; and a formal notice in the *Gazette* forbade the Court to all who visited the contumacious heir to the Crown. Even the Archbishop was refused exemption from the interdict against any person being admitted to the Royal presence who should visit the Princess of Wales.[5]

[1] Memorandum of Delafaye's, 29th November, 1717.—*MS.*
[2] Tilson to Whitworth at the Hague, 29th November, 1717.—*MS.*
[3] To each of the above, 2nd December, 1717.—*MS.*
[4] Sunderland to Marlborough, 2nd December, 1717.—*MS.*
[5] H. Pelham to G. Berkeley, 29th December, 1717.—*MS.*

CHAPTER V.

ASCENDANCY OF SUNDERLAND.

1718.

"Necessity of a Plot"—Scheme to Disinherit the Prince—Cowper's Independence—Retirement of Cowper—Craggs to succeed Addison—Defoe in Government Pay—Foreign Policy—Offer to give up Gibraltar—War with Spain—Mutiny Act—Walpole's Change of Front—Affirmation Bill—Repeal of the Schism Act.

THE alarm caused by the arrest of Gyllenbourg served a certain purpose, but as no proofs of his treachery were ever published the recollection gradually passed away. To justify the measures contemplated by Ministers for augmenting the standing force in and around the Capital there was need of fresh reasons, not always easy to find. A clever pamphlet, in grave irony, appeared without publisher's or printer's name, entitled "The Necessity of a Plot, or Reasons for a Standing Army," by a Friend to K. G., which tried the temper of the Secretary of State, and moved the Attorney-General to wrath. Could the wicked author only be discovered! The passages he marked for special indictment are not bad specimens of the style of party polemic created by Swift's inimitable power of audacious banter. "In a profound tranquillity, while a great and wise Prince adorns the Throne, it may seem an error in politics for the Government to alarm the minds of men with the apprehension of a plot or the necessity of a standing army. But in all ages plots have been in repute with wise men; and as to the effect, it is of no sort of consequence whether they be well or ill-grounded; for the pretended plot will always serve the present turn, as well as the real one. Did not the Swedish plot last spring conduct the designs of the Court smoothly through both Houses, and may not something of the same nature have the same effect this year? I hope

it cannot be imagined that I would hereby insinuate that the Ministry have the least design of pushing any plot upon the world. Although, if I were to speak my mind, I wish we were to have a plot of some kind or other; and if reasons of State did so require it I cannot see why the Ministry should hesitate upon it through tenderness of conscience or passion for truth. If the exigencies of the Government did need a plot, it is just in itself and laudable in the eye of the world to find one out one way or other, although, perhaps, proofs there might be none; and I should look upon it as a general calamity if any person concerned should defeat the good ends proposed hereby out of scruples of conscience."[1] Atterbury was suspected of being the author, but no attempt was made to make him responsible.

Sunderland allowed the King to hug his paternal grudge, and to listen to the mischievous whisperings of those about him in daily depreciation of him whom he had never forgiven for his mother's sin and for his youthful entreaty to visit her in captivity. Enraged at finding no symptoms of submission to his despotic will, he actually ruminated a plan for the partial disinheritance of the Prince. If he must be King, he need not be suffered to be Elector. Cowper lent no encouragement to such a scheme, and it would seem to have lain over while he retained the Great Seal. With a new Chancellor there might be better hopes of success, and we know that his Majesty actually sounded Parker somewhat later as to the feasibility of the project. The Cabinet, if not formally consulted, affected to deliberate, but eventually authorised Parker to inform their wrong-headed Sovereign that the design was impracticable. His Lordship held that, as a matter of dynastic law, a renunciation of the rights of the Princess Sophia might afford room for serious questions touching the succession to the Crown, for it was only on the Elector of Hanover and his heirs that the Crown of Great Britain and Ireland had been settled by Act of Parliament. If he or they were to renounce that title the Throne might be held to have become once more vacant; and meanwhile it was not clear by what feudal or other privilege such a renunciation could be rendered valid without a decree of the Empire. A Jacobite Parliament might, of course, alter this condition of the Act of Succession, as a Whig Parliament had recently

[1] Enclosed in opinion of Sir E. Northey, M.P., to the Chancellor, 1717.—*MS.*

repealed the section requiring his Majesty to ask permission to go abroad. But the existing Parliament would certainly refuse, and the request would be hailed by half the nation as equivalent to lifting anchors and putting to sea again.

The last of the Stuarts was still living openly at Rome under the style and title of James III., and it would, therefore, be an act of unfathomable folly to do aught that would unsettle men's minds again on the vexed question of his legitimacy. George I. moodily submitted, as he had done so often before, and was to do again ; but is it certain that another proposal for getting rid of the Royal difficulty, of which nothing was known till some years later, had not its origin in the abortive consultations that took place at this time?

A recast of administrative parts followed the close of the Session. Of the first Cabinet of the reign few remained. None but Cowper had strength enough to dispute the ascendancy which Sunderland and Stanhope had completely gained, and his position had become so uneasy that, with declining health, he was more than willing to retire. Hints had been dropped of further constitutional changes repugnant to his settled notions of policy and of right; but until they were actually brought before the Cabinet in definite form he hesitated to press his resignation, already often deprecated. It seems to have been understood, however, that it was only deferred, and time was thereby given for the completion of other arrangements with which it would fitly comport.

Cowper was blamed for one great fault, that he kept a separate conscience. In spite of expostulation and reproach, he protested against certain proceedings of the Cabinet, and with still more provoking contumacy he spoke and voted against Walpole's scheme for imposing a tax on Roman Catholics. These were acts of infidelity to party not to be forgiven, and they never were.

Before his accession to the Throne the Elector had quarrelled with his son, whom he compelled to accompany him to England, while his grandchildren were to remain in Hanover and abide his orders absolutely. The Chancellor was consulted as to whether by the laws of England his Majesty was not their sole guardian, and had not, without their consent or that of their father, the disposal of each of them in marriage. Cowper truly replied that statute law recognising such a power there was

none, and that its exercise under the common law had been so long in abeyance, he must respectfully decline to pronounce an opinion. He proposed instead to call on the Chief Justice to summon the Judges, and advised his Majesty to follow their opinion. Parker clutched at the unlooked-for opportunity for ingratiating himself, called his eleven colleagues together at his chambers in Serjeants' Inn, declared his own judgment to be in favour of the claims of the Crown, and desired their opinions *seriatim*. Baron Eyre, who was Chancellor to the Prince, pleaded that he had done nothing to forfeit the custody and direction of his children possessed by every father in England time out of mind, and Baron Price concurred. The other nine succumbed at the bidding of Lord Parker to the demand of the Court. The judicial majority of ten to two in his favour was naturally ascribed by the Monarch to the influence of his devoted Chief Justice, whom he wished to see promoted to the Woolsack. The Master of the Rolls was universally regarded as pre-eminently entitled. Jekyll had acquired a high reputation as an equity judge, and though advanced in years his faculties were unimpaired, and his politics were those of the Administration. But he was not a courtier or a peer. The Chief Justice was both, and on the 12th of May he received the Great Seal at Kensington. Beside the customary allowances and perquisites he had a gratuity of £12,000, and a tellership of the Exchequer in reversion for his son.

On the day of his retirement Cowper wrote: "I have just put in execution, by surrendering the Great Seal into his Majesty's hand, a resolution I had taken a good while since, not to enter on the service of the next term, principally in regard to my health. There could be no occasion so fit as that I have chosen, neither session of Parliament or judicial business now depending. The Ministry were never in a more prosperous position, so that I cannot be said to withdraw either from danger or difficulty. The changes in this great office have always been made, as much as possible, on a sudden, the foresight of them being liable to many inconveniences, which, together with my thinking it my duty not to mention it to any before I did it to his Majesty, I hope you'll allow as a good apology for my not giving your lordship and the rest of the Ministry any notice of it. The party appointed by your lordship for to-morrow being

of the Ministry, 'twould be presumptuous in me not to think it determined as to my being of it, now I am no more of that number; and, indeed, it will be necessary for me to avoid, by being out of town, the uneasy questions and complaints of the many who will be losers by what I have done. But I wish we may continue to act together with zeal and fidelity for his Majesty and the common good."[1]

Stanhope acknowledged the letter in a tone of affected surprise and high-flown compliment. Had he dreamed that the weight of the Great Seal was become too much for Cowper to bear, he would easily have managed to exchange it for some lighter load, so that Government should not lose the inestimable benefit of his lordship's services. But he carefully omitted to make any suggestion that might have had the effect of detaining the ex-Chancellor on his way down stairs. The patriotism of the First Lord must, however, forbid him "to despair of seeing Lord Cowper again in the King's service."[2] Cowper could not misread the hollowness of such expressions. He retired to Colegreen, where he set about trying to cheat himself into believing that he enjoyed the planting of young trees and the pruning of old ones more than the weighing of political interests, and the worry and fuss of high office. The illusion speedily passed away. Used to the exquisite tantalisation of hourly toying with power and the occasional dream that he really possessed it, because he was constantly a witness of its exercise, and suffered to overhear and even to interjaculate his own earnest thoughts amid Cabinet consultations, he could not easily reconcile himself to a solitary stroll on his own gravel walks, or be contented with the mute reverence with which his Hertfordshire labourers received his judgment on the fate of a mulberry tree. The philosophy of retiring was a fine thing to read about, and to write about; and, when his enemies were by, to talk of with measured voice and placid brow. But it could not fill the void within one who had spent his life in climbing, and who, when that was done, had nothing else to do. Who cared? His wife and Princess Caroline; the one because her pride and love were bound up in the man, and the other because she knew the value of him in guiding her wilful and unwise husband, and because she knew not

[1] To Stanhope, April, 1718.—*MS.*

[2] To Cowper, 15th April, 1718.

where to find as untiring and sagacious a political engineer to direct the defences of Leicester House against its real or supposed enemies. Stanhope was not happy in his position as First Lord of the Treasury. His acquaintance with foreign affairs fitted him better for his old department, and an exchange was effected with Lord Sunderland, Stanhope receiving at the same time an earldom. The purport of the changes was not clear to the naked eye at a distance. Speaker Conolly owned it was past his understanding why Lord Sunderland had changed to be First Lord of the Treasury, unless it followed, as he hoped it would, that he would be soon Lord Treasurer.[1]

That was not, however, his ambition. He told George I. that to give strength to administration it was essential that someone should occupy the pre-eminent position, equal at least, if not superior, to that which he himself had held when Viceroy and Privy Seal. He could not undertake the, to him, novel and onerous responsibility of First Commissioner of the Treasury without being President of the Council. The Earl of Dorset, whom everybody loved and no one would offend, had filled that station since the retirement of Devonshire in April, 1717; but there was reason to believe that, from public considerations, he would not hesitate to give way, and Sunderland was accordingly gazetted Lord President of the Council on the 16th, and First Lord of the Treasury on the 20th of March.

While Stanhope presided at the Board of Treasury not a few foreign Princes and Ministers continued to correspond with him, as they had been used to do, confidentially; and the King's habit of consulting him more than any other of his English subjects on continental affairs was not easily altered. It could not be that this mode of transacting business of importance should prove altogether satisfactory. Sunderland's self-love was elastic enough to save him from any sense of mortification in having to assent to decisions of Cabinet on Foreign affairs of which he was felt not to be the author. But jealousy is an orchid that will grow on air and gain even size and strength without means of subsistence palpable to the common eye; and if the Lord of Althorpe was too proud to admit the possibility of slight being meant towards him, his colleague was too shrewd and genial not to fear that the

[1] 25th March, 1718.—Ir. St. Papers.—*MS.* Record Office.

working of the system might lead to mischief. Obvious reasons of policy and convenience suggested the resumption of the Foreign Secretary's Portfolio by one whom so many influential personages abroad concurred in treating with unequalled confidence. The Chancellorship of the Exchequer, which Stanhope had held with the First Lordship of the Treasury, was conferred on John Aislabie, a wealthy and pushing Yorkshire squire, who had contrived to ingratiate himself with the Marlboroughs.

His father, George Aislabie, had for some years held the office of Chief Registrar to the Ecclesiastical Court at York, when he succeeded in winning the hand of the only child of Sir William Mallorie, from whom he inherited the broad lands of Studley and the burgage tenures, some seven score all told, of the quiet little borough of Ripon. Not to be outdone in climbing, his son had himself returned, with his brother for colleague, to the first Parliament of King George; and, not to lose time on the way to notoriety, he had offered, in the course of his first Session, to impeach the newly-made Earl of Strafford for high crimes and misdemeanours in his conduct as plenipotentiary at Utrecht. He had made his mark and became a handy and hardy tool of party purpose whenever he was wanted. He had sat in several Parliaments, and till 1714 had filled no office of higher importance than that of Mayor of Ripon, whose handful of burgage-holders were required to return him and a friend of his to Westminster. He was then, from his knowledge of Parliamentary practice, made Treasurer of the Navy, a position which then and long afterwards was next in importance to that of the Exchequer in Committee of Supply. Richard Hampden now took his place, while he was promoted, unhappily for himself, to the more critical and perilous one of Second Commissioner to the Treasurer. Had Aislabie been an upright or even a prudent man, his tenure of office might have passed without discredit or calamity. For a time the routine of the Department went on undisturbed. Its spokesman in Committee of Ways and Means was hardly thought worth worrying by Opposition, and when he revisited Studley Park in the recess his wondering neighbours could only congratulate him on his rare good fortune, and extol his gracious hospitality. Events and contingencies were

the while at hand, a premonitory glimpse of which would doubtless have made him pray to be delivered from the temptation of things that were too high for him, or from occupying himself in great matters.

Not a few proofs have escaped the tide of oblivion, in which the best acts of public men are ordinarily doomed to perish, that Addison was not forgotten after he left Ireland; and that on his part he was glad in his new position to promote any good object his friends there had in view. It was probably due to his intervention that Trinity College obtained from the Treasury a grant to found the library, which has since become one of the most valuable possessions of the University. Not less gratifying to him must have been the duty of directing Lord Stair at Paris to ask the Regent's protection of Bolingbroke from insult, now that he had renounced the service of the Stuarts, and was seeking the benefit of amnesty and permission to live once more in England. Deadly political strife had not obliterated the memory of mutual enjoyment in each other's company or betrayed into disparaging the splendid evidences given by his competitor for fame. When Secretary of State, Bolingbroke had led the applause at the first performance of *Cato*, and complimented Booth with a purse of fifty guineas for his admirable protest againt the danger of a military dictator; and now it was Addison's privilege in the same office to tell his fallen predecessor, without a sarcasm, that no danger was apprehended from allowing him to return home. While his duties lay in corresponding with Foreign Courts, Lieutenants of Counties, Judges of Assize, or the Irish Privy Council—even though, as Pope suggests, he sometimes wearied himself in quest of the most fitting turn of phrase—the pride of the man was daily gratified by having attained the summit of his ambition. But as the days shortened and the meeting of Parliament drew on, he began to anticipate the questioning of Bromley, Shippen, and Pulteney; and the necessity of making half-a-dozen speeches in the week, every epithet and adverb of which might be caught at by unscrupulous critics as committing his colleagues in debate. How much happier would be an evening at Button's amid his deferential senate of poets and play-wrights, philosophers, and divines; and did not his health, after years of hard work of so many kinds, crave repose?

By Christmas he persuaded himself that he was not very well, and he devolved the perfunctory duties of his place on Temple Stanyan, who long had lent him confidential aid. In March he resigned the Seals, which he had held less than a year, receiving a retiring pension of £1,500 a year. The first use of his liberty was a cordial letter to Swift, reverting to their old literary sympathies and undertaking to help in advancing some suggestions of the Dean's; having no longer any excuse for delay, as, "God be thanked, he was entirely free both of his office and his asthma."[1]

Who was to succeed Addison? Duchess Sarah, who, with all her pride and love of magnificence, had in her a more genuine and courageous sympathy with talent than all the dilettante patrons of art and letters of her time, bade Sunderland take young Craggs, who was among her favourites, and make him Addison's successor. He was the son of a land steward, and had had, as a boy, but an indifferent education. But he was undoubtedly possessed of considerable abilities, and a rare tact and suavity of manner, by which he rose rapidly in the world.

He was one of the singular men of whom it may be said their deficiencies have floated them upwards. Sarah had sent him to Oxford, but even she could not make him read. He brought away with him a degree and a little scholarship; and even those who wished to thrust him forward with a view to use him could not pretend that he was well informed. But he had the gaiety of temper that consoled him in all failures, the elasticity of spirits whereof his betters were frequently in want. A keen critic long afterwards described him as one who, by perseverance and exercise, from a very bad became a very good speaker. He had no foundation of literature, and yet he had a happy knack in turning phrases, which few of his superiors equalled; and being a man of pleasure it was not to be supposed he could have had much time for solid improvement. "No one ever exceeded him in the management of many sour and perverse Members. He attended their clubs, and by his songs and jollity put them into, and kept them in, good humour. He was successful in making himself agreeable, and in making himself esteemed and beloved beyond any man in his disadvantageous circumstances. On the other

[1] March 20th, 1718.

hand, he was said not to have been a good speaker, and reproached for speaking from the insolence of office, and that if reduced to private life he would have made but a poor figure in Parliament. To great vivacity, assurance, and good luck his surprising exaltation was to be imputed."[1] To which old Horace of Woolterton, who knew him well, rejoined, "As a Minister he had no scheme or principle calculated for the service of his country; but, like a true disciple of Sunderland, his views and actions had no other tendency, right or wrong, but that of making himself appear great and considerable."

The elevation of Craggs subjected him to many taunts and sneers, for was he not an intruder, an upstart, a nobody? When the Duke of Buckingham, on one occasion, was railing fiercely against the profusion of the Government, Craggs confessed that much of what had been said was true; but there was an old saying, "The pot must boil." "Yes," rejoined his Grace, "and there is, as you know, Mr. Secretary, as old and as true a proverb, that when the pot boils the scum floats uppermost."

In subordinate office, and later as Secretary-at-War, Sunderland had found him docile and dutiful. His vanity, which affected an absurd degree of familiarity with those who were socially above him, never tripped at the threshold of him whom he knew to be worth all the rest of the world to him; and the Earl, who now began to enjoy the pride and pleasure of ascendancy, resolved to bring no one within the magic circle of power likely to dispute his will. Craggs the father was faultless in compliance, Craggs the son would probably be so too. There was, of course, the danger that too rapid elevation would turn his head; but dangers must be run, and on the whole it seemed safer to have an expert nobody for a colleague, who must be ready to do what was wanted, than any man of the stamp of Nottingham or Townshend, who had proved so constant a source of irritation and conflict. So the younger Craggs became Secretary of State for the Northern Department. Lord Castlecomer, brother-in-law of Newcastle, was named in his stead, but in a few weeks he proved so incompetent that Robert Pringle took his place; and, failing to obain a seat, he in his turn gave way to G. Treby, while Pringle was compensated by an appointment at the Board of Customs.

[1] Etough to Walpole, 26th July, 1751.—*MS.*

The Cabinet was not unmindful of support in the Press, and had Ministers lapsed into carelessness their permanent staff of Under-Secretaries were too well versed in the mechanism of official influence to permit its loss for lack of prompting or pay. They had, indeed, the benefit, little understood at the time, of a pen which has since become notable, irrespective of political or sectarian controversies, wherever the English language prevails. From the outset, Stanhope, and even Townshend, blunt, hard, and business-like as he was, did not feel inclined to reject the suggestion of Delafaye in 1714, that they might rescue from ruin and make a friend of one whose help might be of inestimable worth. Daniel Defoe, over zealous in the cause of the new dynasty, had published a libel on one of the Council of Regency, supposed to be in the interest of the Pretender. The imputation of treason was too plain to be excused; and, having no defence, he was awaiting the judgment of the Court of King's Bench. When the change of Government took place his versatility as a periodical writer, and the variety of employers whom he had served in the Press, made him, in the eyes of Under-Secretary Delafaye, a clandestine ally to be courted, and to be secured, if possible, on reasonable terms. Though not yet past his prime, he was wayworn by disappointment, and sick at heart of penury and privation.

Delafaye knew all his troubles, and watched for opportunity to aid in bringing them to an end. Why should not his sentence be shortened or respited now that times and hands were changed? Chief Justice Parker was no punctilious, impracticable man. On the contrary, a man fond of influence, staunch to party, and eager to make himself of use. Might he not be propitiated by a skilful appeal to magnanimity, mercy, justice in the abstract, and other considerations which a great master of idiom and ideality would well know how to compound? Delafaye persuaded his friend to write a letter of expostulation and entreaty. The Lord Chief Justice decided to hear more on the subject, and to listen to such conditions and pledges for the future as might possibly warrant a pardon. Delafaye next set himself about engaging his facile pen in the service of Government; and we have Defoe's account of the affair in a letter to his friend at Whitehall. He was anxious that his relations to the Government should be clearly understood by whoever might be Secretary of

State; and though he doubted not that Delafaye would duly acquaint whoever might be in power with what humble sense of favours conferred he received the account the Under-Secretary was pleased to give him, "that his little services were accepted, and that he was to go on upon the foot of former capitulations," &c., he thought it best to give a short account, as clear as he could, how far his original instructions empowered him to act, and, in a word, what the little piece of secret service was, for which he was so much a subject of favour and bounty. He proceeds to narrate minutely how the transaction came about during the Ministry of Townshend.[1]

Parker recommended his colleagues to accept Defoe's profession of attachment to the interest of the Government. In considering which way he might be rendered most useful, it was proposed by Townshend that he should still appear as if, as before, he were under the displeasure of the Government and separated from the Whigs; and that he might be more serviceable in a kind of disguise than if he appeared openly. Upon this foot a weekly paper, which he was at first directed to write in opposition to a scandalous publication called the *Shift Shifted*, was laid aside, and the first thing he engaged in was a monthly journal called *Mercurius Politicus*. In the interval, Dyer of the *News Letter* being dead, he had an offer of a share in it as well as the management. Townshend let him know, through Mr. Buckley, that it would be a very acceptable piece of service, for the *News Letter* was very prejudicial to the public, and the most difficult to come at in a judicial way. His lordship was pleased to add that he would consider his service in that case, which he afterwards did. Upon this he engaged, and though the property was not wholly his own, yet "the conduct and government of the style and news was so entirely in him that he ventured to assure the Minister that the sting of that mischievous paper should be entirely taken out, though the style should continue Tory as it was, that the party might be amused, and not set up another, which would have destroyed the design." This went on for a year before Townshend went out of office, and in consideration of this service he made an appointment, with promise of further allowance. Lord Sun-

[1] To Under-Secretary Delafaye from Newington, 26th April, 1718. State Papers, Record Office. Given in full by W. Lee in his "Collection of Defoe's Writings."

derland, to whose goodness he had, many years before, been obliged, when he was in a secret commission sent to Scotland, was pleased to approve and continue this service and the appointment annexed, and, with his lordship's approbation, "he introduced himself in the disguise of a translator of foreign news, to be so far concerned in the weekly paper of Mist's as to be able to keep it within the circle of a secret management, and also prevent the mischievous part of it; and yet neither Mist nor any of those concerned with him had the least guess or suspicion by whose direction he did it. This paper, called the *Journal*, was not in himself in property, as the other only in management, with the express difference, that if anything happened to be put in without his knowledge, which might give offence, his lordship would be sure always to know whether he had a servant to reprove or a stranger to correct. Upon the whole, however, this was the consequence, that by this management the *Weekly Journal* and *Dormer's News Letter*, as also the *Mercurius Politicus*, which was in the same nature of management as the *Journal*, could be always kept (mistakes excepted) to pass as Tory papers, and yet be disabled and eviscerated, so as to do no mischief or give any offence to the Government. He was, for this service, posted among Papists, Jacobites, and enraged high Tories—a generation whom his very soul abhorred. He was obliged to hear traitorous expressions and outrageous words against his Majesty's person and Government and his most faithful servants, and smile at it all as if he approved it; and he often ventured to let things pass which were a little shocking that he might not render himself suspected. Thus he bowed in the House of Rimmon, and most humbly recommended himself to his lordship's protection."[1]

His employers at Whitehall, however, did not always appreciate the expediency of allowing these "shocking" paragraphs to slip in as the disguised editor did; and Secretary Craggs viewed with increasing wrath the virulence of disaffection which broke forth in weekly type, notwithstanding all the furtive assurances given by Defoe of the worth of his process of editorial vaccination.

Defoe was at this time a sincere partisan of Government, and careful not to be discredited by sub-editorial errors on the part of those who were known to write under his direction. There is a curious disclaimer by him of "a paragraph in the *Post Boy*, of

[1] To C. Delafaye, 26th April, 1718.

the Pretender being in the list of the Queen Dowager's children, which Mr. Mist inserted after Defoe had looked over what he had gotten together." It was not done from malice, he was sure, and Mr. Mist had renewed his promise to be more wary in the future.[1]

Again he writes to the Under-Secretary: "I hope I have kept the difficult people I have to do with within the bounds of duty, and am in hopes to draw them gradually within yet narrower limits of respect. It is a hard matter to please the Tory Party, as their present temper operates, without abusing, not only the Government, but the persons of our Governor in everything we write. But, to the best of my skill, I cause all letters and paragraphs which look that way to be intercepted and stopped at the Press."

He had an entire dependence on Sunderland's justice and goodness that no unintentional offence should be remembered to his prejudice.[2]

After another conference with the Under-Secretary, he reported that he had brought Mr. Mist to reason, and he had promised not to offend again. "The liberties that Buckley mentioned, viz., to seem on the same side, to rally the *Flying Post*, the Whig writers, and even the word 'Whig,' &c., and to admit foolish and trifling things in favour of the Tories, Defoe represented as liberty enough, and resolved his paper should for the future amuse the Tories, but not affront the Government. He had freely told him this was the only way to preserve his paper, to keep himself from a jail, and to secure the advantages which now arose to him from it." Curll, the bookseller, had lately tried to trepan Mist into the use of disloyal words with a view to inform against him; but Defoe hoped the Government were above the use of such expedients, and should anything come of it in this case, he undertook to lay bare the whole stratagem.

Meanwhile, a book, scandalously reflecting on Sunderland, had been prepared for publication at Mist's office, the proofs of which, with his consent, Defoe had possession of in order to place them in the Earl's hands. "He believed the time was come when the journals, instead of affronting and offending the Government, might in many ways be made serviceable to them,

[1] Defoe to Delafaye, 10th May, 1718.
[2] Defoe to Delafaye, 23rd May, 1718.

and he had Mr. Mist so absolutely resigned to proper measures for it, that he was persuaded he might answer for it." [1]

Yet, with all his craft and complaisance, Defoe could not refrain from breaking out occasionally against the party and sectarian bigotry he loathed. The semi-official harness he secretly wore galled him, and he took advantage of his undefined and undefinable function of double-faced monitor of rival sects and factions, to say not a few provoking things that much wanted saying; but which no one of political or literary mark would venture to say above his name. He himself dared not scold his employers at Whitehall for detaining in Newgate or Carlisle prison, without trial for want of evidence, numbers of unhappy Jacobites; he dared not personally plead for their release, or even for mitigation of their treatment, without risking the continuance of Ministerial confidence and pay. But he could not look on and be altogether mute. As early as May, 1716 there appeared the inquiry, in the usual guise of a nameless outsider's question, "whether justice, so-called as respects the public, or revenge, so called as respects party, should be extended against the rebels in general, or whether mercy should interpose to the saving them from the hands of the executioner, should proof tardily turn up; or saving their families from the misery of their being kept to pine and famish in prolonged incarceration." The Sessions, nevertheless, at the Old Bailey ending soon after, nine men and one woman were left for execution; and month after month severities continued to be dealt on the devoted dupes of disaffection, on the official plea that counter revolution was a contagious disease that must be pitilessly stamped out. But so did not think Defoe; and we find him appealing to the better instincts of men in the form of a narrative, told with all his grace and graphic point, of two Whig gentlemen who happened to pass the Sicilian Embassy where a collection was making for the prisoners in Lancaster Castle, whose condition was said to be deplorable. One said to his friend, "I like this very well; I am resolved I'll give them something." "Do you consider what you are saying? It is for the rebels." "I know that very well," he replied, "but they are not in rebellion now; and there is a great deal of difference between an enemy in the field and a rebel in jail; to relieve the first would be a sin against the King, and

[1] Defoe to Delafaye, 13th June, 1718.

not to relieve the last would be a sin against God." "Well, but," said the other, "they are our enemies, and I am sure you abhor them." "So I do; I abhor their crime, but I pity their persons; and are we not commanded if our enemy hunger to feed him?" Whereupon he went and put in a guinea, and coming away he said, "There are two sorts of poor in the world; there is God's poor, and the Devil's poor; the one we are bound to take care of, but even the other should not starve."[1] Ministers, however, cared not for these things; and the Under-Secretary's notes are from time to time interspersed for many a month after with lists of persons suspected of grave offence or undergoing imprisonment for lesser delinquencies.

In spite of Defoe's ingenious efforts to burlesque clerical impieties and newspaper treasons, their reiteration stung the political susceptibility of the Court; and the Lord President, like a man kept from sleep by vermiculate tormentors, laid about him indiscriminately. "He would have them lay hold of friend and foe, and plague all alike who took the liberty of publishing false news; and he would be obliged to Delafaye and Buckley if they would lay everyone by the heels as often as they caught them tripping. He would give £200 a-year to some wrangling, teasing attorney that knew how to tear and rend these wretches."[2] Secretary Craggs was only too ready to fall in with this irritable humour. No time should be lost by Delafaye and Crackerode in using all the rigour imaginable in punishing the authors and publishers of such scandals. It appears that under Secretary's warrant many quires of Mist's *Journal* were seized, and various private letters from contributors. Defoe's name is not mentioned in the depositions. It was decided that, beside punishing the authors, printers, and publishers, the Justices of the Peace should have it given them in charge by the Lord Chancellor to punish the keepers of the coffee houses and public houses that took them in, that Mr. Crackerode should read all the Journals as they came out, and when he found anything in them punishable should attend Mr. Attorney-General for his opinion.

Several of the non-juring clergy were prosecuted for reading the Liturgy with the omission of the prayer for the King. The

[1] Mist's *Journal.*

[2] Mem. Sec. of State's Office, 1st Nov., 1718.—*MS.*

Rev. Mr. Hawes, who performed the service in his own house opposite St. James's, was fined £20 for every repetition of that offence. Certain of the Scotch clergy, on being convicted a second time, though not found guilty of praying for James III., were silenced for three years. Nor were the Penal Laws maintained as threats merely to overawe the Jacobites, or left to the caprice of local bigotry to be put in execution. Informations were taken by the Under-Secretary against one Grimes, for saying Mass at Calais, and who was found subsequently dwelling in London wearing the garb of a Capuchin, and going by the name of Father Archangel; the Statute in that behalf to the contrary notwithstanding.[1] About the same time Orme, a non-juror, was cast into prison for having attended Sheppard after his trial; and failed to acknowledge what he had confessed to him in his last hours. This was held to be identical with that of Cook and others who absolved Charnock for the guilt of treason in King William's time; and was said, therefore, to be an accessory after the fact. The Solicitor of the Treasury reported that the use of the non-juring Prayer-book was criminal, though it might be difficult to frame an indictment against the author or publisher of it.[2] The Rev. Mr. Bisse was indicted for preaching sermons full of seditious matter. He had narrowly escaped the penalties of *præmunire*, but was liable to indictment under other Statutes.[3] He was prosecuted accordingly, and was sentenced to stand in the pillory in the City and at Westminster; to pay a fine of £600; to be imprisoned for four years; and to find two sureties in £500 each for his good behaviour.[4]

Stanhope re-entered on the duties he had but half abandoned for a time, with renewed vigour. A spirited foreign policy was his sleeping and waking dream, and backed as he was by Sunderland and the majority of the Cabinet, his success was complete. No sooner had the Triple Alliance been ratified than negotiations were begun to induce the Emperor and the Duke of Savoy to join with a view to the reconstruction of the map of Italy. Sicily had been annexed to Piedmont, and its towns were

[1] 13th Dec., 1718.—*MS.*
[2] Mem. of Delafaye's, 1718.—*MS.*
[3] Mem. Delafaye's handwriting.—*MS.*
[4] Report of Solicitor to the Treasury, 27th November, 1718.

occupied by her troops with the promise of Austrian support in case of attack as, was feared, from Spain, whose resources by sea and land had, as by miracle, been raised from the torpor of decrepitude by the genius of Alberoni; the fruits of his administrative skill, and the recital of his gigantic clutchings at European ascendancy, belong rather to historical romance than to the outlook of foreign relations from Whitehall. Ministerial unanimity being established by the recent changes of office, the Duum-viri practically determined the conduct of home and foreign policy. Stanhope set all his varied wits at work to bring about that concert long deemed impossible, between the Powers of Central and Western Christendom. To this the great obstacle was the naval and military ambition of Spain, or rather of her fanatical Queen and her adventurous Premier; for Philip V., in whose absolute name everything was done, and on whose personal claim to the Regency, if not to the throne of France, all their projects turned, had no other thought or word in Council but that he would sell his shirt sooner than abandon his dynastic rights, or for the sake of any temporal advantage relax in enmity to heretics at home, and heterodox powers abroad. His Cardinal Minister was troubled with no such scruples, and failing to obtain the confidence of the Vatican, or to subvert the Guardianship of Orleans, he was ready to negotiate with the Porte against Austria, with Charles XII. against England, and with the Czar against Catholic Poland for a confederacy that was to clear the seas of all but the new Armada, and sweep Italy from Etna to the Alps. The steps of the perilous ladder by which this marvellous man had risen to administrative power almost unique, have often been described.

It happened that during Stanhope's military career in Spain they had become acquainted in camp and subsequently in Council, where the General was fascinated by his versatility and vigour, and led to form an intimacy, kept up by constant correspondence, hoping in time for a good understanding between their Governments. By the Triple Alliance which the Spaniard had pledged himself to baulk, their political friendship was rent in twain, yet Stanhope did not forego the expectation of being able to assuage his disappointment, if not to reconcile him to a new order of things, and he obtained from the Cabinet and from George I. powers of concession in the last resort, the record of which in after times reads like fable. While Dubois still lingered

in London making himself more than others *personâ gratâ* at the Royal table, where his limitless experience in all the wit and licence of the Palais Royal made him only too great a favourite with the King, Stanhope and Dubois lived, as formerly, much together. Their politics, like their pleasures, ran in the same groove, and when the assurance of M. Abbé had thoroughly satisfied the English Court and Cabinet that his Government were infrangibly bound to resist the aggressive policy of Spain, Stanhope accompanied Dubois to Paris, where it took all the Ambassador's strength of character to baffle the intrigues of Alberoni. Redress had been asked for the crimping of English sailors in Spanish ports, who were compelled to serve on ships of war, and for the seduction and detention of artificers in the naval arsenals and dockyards at Ferrol and Barcelona, while numerous acts of violence by privateers had caused frequent expostulation to be made, but hitherto in vain. Still more[1] important was the grievance complained of by the South Sea Company, of the manner in which their rights had been infringed.

In May, 1717, Sunderland had obtained from the Spanish Government an extension of the limits within which merchandise might be shipped by the holders of the Assiento contract, from five hundred to six hundred and fifty tons, to be offered for sale at colonial fairs. The South Sea Company represented that notwithstanding this concession, they had had notice from the Spanish Ambassador that their vessels lading with valuable merchandise must not depart for Vera Cruz or Porto Bello, where they would not be suffered to unload or expose their goods for sale. They, therefore, called upon the Government to interpose. The ground alleged for this suspension of export from Europe seems to have been a glut in the trading towns of South America, and an offer by way of compensation was made by the Chevalier Eon that twice as many galleons from England might be despatched next year.[2] While endeavouring in concert with Stair and Dubois to induce the Regent to concur in such terms as would win the alliance of the Emperor and the acquiescence of Madrid, Stanhope (no doubt with the approval of Sunderland) promised confidentially to recommend his Govern-

[1] Extract of letter from Secretary Craggs, 17th June, 1718.—*MS.*

[2] Directors of S. S. Company to Secretary of State, and letter of Spanish Minister in London, 5th June, 1718—*MS.*

ment to suggest the possible relinquishment of Gibraltar. The proposal was embodied in a secret despatch received by his colleague, and laid by the First Lord of the Treasury before the King, who "authorised Secretary Craggs to let Stanhope know that his Majesty approved of his proposition relating to Gibraltar, and in case his Excellency found it would conclude and settle everything, he was thereby authorised to make that offer when he should find it expedient."[1] If Spain would withdraw her troops from Sicily and leave the Italian peninsula in peace, the coveted fortress should be given up. The maintenance of its garrison had long proved a source of exorbitant cost, and the pride of Spain, it was imagined, would eagerly grasp at the recovery of a possession whose retention by a foreign Power was in the face of Europe a greater humiliation than substantial injury. By way of compensation to England, the cession of certain territories in America was to be required, but so secretly was the whole negotiation conducted that no trace remains of their extent or value.

Stanhope being satisfied that the Regent d'Orleans was firm, and learning from Cadogan that the States General were prepared to become parties with Austria in the new Alliance,[2] took the resolution of making a journey to Madrid in the hope of being able, by personal communications with Alberoni, to avert the rupture which he felt was imminent. The Cardinal did not refuse him passports, but caused them to be delayed, in order to give time for a Spanish fleet of thirty sail to reach the coast of Sicily, the object being to reduce the Imperialist garrison there before succour could arrive. The English Government, apprised by Colonel Stanhope, then Envoy at Madrid, of the unusual preparations making at Cadiz and Barcelona, had ordered Berkeley to equip and despatch a powerful squadron under Admiral Byng to the Mediterranean. Though they were not prepared to precipitate an actual breach of the peace, he had sealed orders to touch at St. Vincent and acquaint the English Minister in the capital that he had instructions, not to be opened till his arrival on the Sicilian coast, where he would expect information from him. Stanhope, on his arrival, found the Court at the Escurial, whither he followed. Alberoni's temper had meantime become exaspe-

[1] Secretary Craggs to Ambassador at Paris, 17th July, 1718.
[2] Cadogan to Craggs, 28th June, 1718.—Stowe Papers *MS.*

rated by the tidings that his negotiations with Austria had failed. King Philip felt, or affected to feel, indifferent to the tempting lure, and Stanhope began to fear that he must return by the way that he came, when an express informed him of the sanguinary conflict off Syracuse and the destruction of the Spanish fleet. Alberoni vented his wrath in no measured terms, and when shown the names of the ships under Byng, with details of their equipment, he tore the list in atoms and trampled them under his feet. Yielding, soon after, to a revulsion of feeling, perhaps hoping hourly for news from the fleet under Castañeta, his Eminence reverted to the better days they had spent together, and promised to avert any breach of friendly relations. Muffled in diplomatic reserve, which has never been thoroughly penetrated, we learn that in an audience of the King, Stanhope offered, as he had been authorised to do by George I., the restoration of the great fortress. The effect of the victory of Syracuse in Paris and the Hague was hardly less than that in London, and Sunderland naturally exulted in a confirmation of his power. He would have been unlike all his successors had he been able to resist the influence of the subtlest and strongest of intoxicants. Thenceforth we shall find him gradually yet continuously presuming more and more, not only that to-morrow should be even as yesterday, and yet more abundant, but his tenor of ascendancy being unlimited, he might gratify the arrogant ambition of his nature, and write his name large in changes more or less fundamental in the constitution.

When Parliament met in November, all shades of Opposition attacked the foreign policy of Government. Stanhope in the Upper House and Craggs in the Lower defended it with vigour and success. The power of Spain at sea had grown too great, and it was high time it should be reduced if English commerce was to be pursued in safety. Walpole, still in Parliamentary alliance with Wyndham and Shippen, denounced the Quadruple Treaty, as contrary to sound policy and public faith. Ministers having improvidently and unjustifiably begun a war with Spain, sought to make it the Parliament's war, which he would fain have had the Commons refuse to do. But the House had been too well handled by Government to follow his advice, and a majority voted an Address of confidence and approval, with liberal supplies.

In the Upper House, Carteret was put forward to move an Address of gratulation on the events at sea, and the accession of Austria to the Alliance with France and the States General. Nottingham, Cowper, Devonshire, and Argyll concurred with Oxford, Harcourt, and North and Grey in objecting to the outbreak of hostilities without a declaration of war, and the venturous policy abroad to which the Cabinet was now committed; but Stanhope revelled in exultation, boasted of having given authority to Byng to baffle any attempt to take possession by surprise, which, having suspected, he had vainly called on the Spanish Government to disclaim, and characteristically offered to answer with his head for the issue, should war be forced upon them. The Peers, by 83 to 50, ratified Carteret's resolution; and he gained such credit in debate that in reward for this and his previous service to Government in the memorable contention on the Mutiny Bill, he was sent soon after as Ambassador to Stockholm—the first step in his long administrative career. Undismayed by their loss at sea, the Spanish Government doggedly refused to give any satisfaction for the injuries complained of by the Dutch and English traders; and it was even said, in concert with Sweden, held out fresh hopes to the Pretender.

On the 3rd of December orders were issued by the Admiralty to make reprisals on Spanish ships, and authorising letters of marque; and on the 18th war was declared and the Warden of the Cinque Ports, and other officers on the coast, were directed to seize all vessels and goods belonging to the enemy, giving a share of all prizes to the captors.[1] Stanhope advised our Ministers abroad, that a Great Council was held at St. James's where his Majesty approved and signed a declaration of war, and ordered that the same should be duly published, and the French Government would do the same in a few days.[2] The Cabinet were in high spirits. Both Houses of Parliament addressed the King with a promptitude and vigour which would encourage their friends, and would, they hoped, contribute much to shortening the war.[3] Aislabie fondly persuaded himself that as the lot had fallen to him in pleasant places, he had only to carry out

[1] Mem. Dec., 1718.—*MS.*
[2] Stanhope to Dayrolle, 16th Dec., 1718.—*MS.*
[3] 19th Dec. 1718.—*MS.*

fully the financial plans of his predecessor to keep the City in his favour. It was not so easy, however, as sensible Addison and flimsy Craggs discovered, to face the brunt of attack in debate on subjects where Walpole was committed, and where his previous administrative knowledge made him more than a match for all the official staff. The severest tug was that on the Mutiny Bill, whose novel rigour was said to have become necessary with a permanent increase of foreign troops. Some verbal amendments having been made in the Lords, the Bill was returned to the Lower House, where, instead of giving the signal for a renewal of the struggle, Walpole declared that he meant to acquiesce, and hoped his friends would bow to the decision come to by both Houses. For himself, he had not changed his mind, but if they were to have an augmented standing army, he had rather the soldiery were liable to be tried by inferior courts-martial than not be tried at all. This was decisive; and by a large majority the measure became law. New articles of war were from time to time ordered under the Sign Manual, expanding the sphere of corporal punishment for implied disrespect or constructive disobedience; and for one hundred years the Mutiny Act of 1718 was annually renewed without essential change.

In the inaugural speech to the Privy Council prepared for George I., and read in his name by Cowper, a pledge of toleration and protection was given to all who professed and called themselves Protestants; and as an earnest of its redemption a Bill was brought in for rendering permanent the Act of William and Mary, which allowed Quakers to give evidence in civil suits on affirmation instead of oath. No opposition was offered in either House; and in the Upper a clause was introduced extending the Bill to Scotland. With this concession the Cabinet, however, paused; the King was satisfied; and nothing further was done for some time in fulfilment of the pledges to complete religious liberty.

Three years had elapsed since the change of dynasty, and the Dissenters complained that the promises then given of a Restoration policy were over-due. In Parliament a movement was set on foot to agitate the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, and while the Cabinet was in the throes of disruption and reorganisation, more than two hundred Members of the House of Commons met to consider the propriety of

removing, without further delay, the civil disabilities of Dissenters. Lord Molesworth, Mr. Jessop, and Sir Richard Steele advocated immediate action, while Mr. Tufnel was authorised to express Government fears of defeat in the House of Lords; and the assembly adjourned to give time to consult and deliberate. Sunderland, who claimed to be the champion of sectarian liberty, and who had hitherto held back, saw that a favourable opportunity had arrived; and he led the Cabinet to undertake the measures thus pressed upon them. At the adjourned meeting of Commoners, an intimation was given that several of the obstacles hitherto in the way had been removed. In other words, they were given to understand that the Cabinet were prepared to take the initiative in the cause their supporters had so much at heart. Some months must still elapse before anything could legislatively be done; but Molesworth, as chairman of the meeting, recommended patience and confidence, and his opinion had great weight. Possessed of considerable talent and energy, he had entered public life as a diplomatist, and recently published a descriptive work on Denmark, whose condition he had become thoroughly acquainted with when resident there as Envoy. He now enjoyed the privileges of irresponsibility as Member for the obscure hamlet of Michell, in Cornwall. In the Speech from the Throne, the policy of uniting all sects of Protestants by a sense of equal rights and liberties was declared to be the best for the Church as well as the State; and the expectations thus excited rose so high that public meetings in many of the great towns demanded the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Sunderland, however, deprecated provoking a spirit of resistance not to be overcome. Walpole, already coalescing with the Tories in Opposition, would resist the repeal of the Test Act. His advice was taken, and it was agreed to let the question of municipal disqualification lie over to a more convenient season. Stanhope asked leave to bring in a Bill to strengthen the Protestant interest; which, beside repealing the Acts of Anne, amended in certain particulars those passed at the Restoration. He relied on the justice and policy of restoring the Nonconformists to municipal rights, and of relieving them from the stigma and burthen cast upon them in troubled times and compassed by unwarrantable methods.

The Church of England would more than ever be the head of all the Protestant Churches, and the Archbishop of Canterbury would become the Patriarch of all the clergy of the reformed faith. The new Primate (Wake) did not accept the prophetic dignity thus awarded him, and, with Lansdowne and many temporal and spiritual Peers, made difficulties on various grounds. Cowper retained his aversion to the Acts of the late reign, but would not meddle with the Test Act.

The second reading was carried by 86 to 68, but in Committee the clauses modifying the Test Act were withdrawn. In the Commons, Walpole and his brother Horace, Shippen, and Wyndham opposed; while Hampden, Secretary Craggs, Jekyll, Lechmere, and Heathcote supported it. The debate lasted many hours; and the Cabinet prevailed by a majority of 41 in a House unusually full.[1]

Within the Cabinet Sunderland had attained the pre-eminence he desired; yet he was not content. The outer world did not question, and did not even care, why there had been a second exchange of offices with Stanhope. People might still mistake which of them was Chief Minister. Stanhope, indeed, never disputed the matter. He liked the duties of the Foreign Department better than those of the Treasury, and he was well satisfied to resume his correspondence with Vienna and the Hague; leaving the whole business of budget-framing, tax-gathering, and schemes for the better prevention of smuggling, to his successor. Sunderland, however, could not be satisfied unless common fools as well as fools of quality recognised him as head of the Administration; and he could think of no better way of showing himself to be *primus inter pares* than by taking in addition a conspicuous office in the Household. To head a Cabinet containing seven Dukes, he told the King that he must have some distinctive mark of pre-eminence, and that he therefore wished, along with his political functions, to discharge those of Groom of the Stole. The head of the house of Sackville had till then enjoyed that distinction. He had taken part in the Revolution by arranging with Bishop Compton the escape of Princess Anne, escorting her to Nottingham Castle, where Devonshire, at the head of his regiment, awaited

[1] 7th January, 1719.

her coming, and entertained her with princely hospitality until the crisis was overpast. For his reward, Dorset, in his father's life-time, had obtained the Earldom of Middlesex; and, being of an unenvious temper, he seemed content with the first place in the King's household, whence no one dreamt of removing him. But, the place being wanted by the Chief Minister, means were found to persuade him to give way; and in due time he became Duke of Dorset. Not to provoke jealousy, Lords Carnarvon, Chandos, and Manchester were raised to the same dignity. In the Cabinet, Parker took no prominent part. His opinion had weight in matters of administration; but hardly on critical legislative questions. It is even said that of the Dissenters' Relief Bill he knew little, and not much more of the memorable Peerage Bill, until they were laid on the table. He had no lack of envious critics, whom his rapid rise had made; and he saw nothing to be gained by bringing to their notice the weakness of his position—weakness he could not cure. He had offended the Prince on points not easily forgiven; and if he was to long enjoy the sunshine of Royalty he must keep clear of differences with his colleagues, and tell the world that they were members of a united Cabinet. He turned his thoughts from foreign to domestic, and from legislative to judicial cares.

His social ambition satisfied, he devoted himself to the mastering of equity practice, in which he was undeft, and to the accumulation of wealth, for which the holder of his office had exceptional opportunities. In the former he succeeded rapidly by his assiduity in the acquisition of previous rulings, and a power little short of genius in discriminating and marshalling them. In seven years not a judgment of his was reversed; and, though he never overcame the jealousy of leading members of the profession, he earned the repute that has never been effaced, of being a great magistrate. His leanings were towards Executive rigour; and in spite of the reassuring reports of Churchill and Bulkley, who had been sent into the Western counties to spy out tendencies to disaffection, and who reported nothing but apathy and peace,[1] the Cabinet resolved upon renewed suspensions of *Habeas Corpus*, and intermittent measures of repression. While they wavered, warning

[1] Reports to Secretary Stanhope, March, 1719.—*MS.*, Record Office.

came from Dubois of a naval rendezvous at Cadiz for an invading expedition under Ormond's command.[1]

Government did not feel itself secure; it lived in perpetual alarm from imputed plots and treasons; and the frightened are too apt to be cruel. Their pamphleteers and journalists set up for ever that the bulk of an ignorant community hankered still after an English Sovereign; that Jacobitism was the undoubted tradition of many of the nobles and three-fourths of the squires; and that the rural clergy believed and taught, as far as they dared, the imprescriptible right of the Pretender. But this, by inference, went far to make away with the case for the Revolution, and it was thought indispensable to stamp out the dangerous doctrine when quoted or insisted on by opponents.

The proceedings against a youth of nineteen, named Matthews, for a seditious pamphlet he had the folly to have privately printed, but which he had neither sold nor distributed, mark indelibly the temper of the Executive rule at the time. His father was a printer in Aldersgate, after whose death he continued to serve his apprenticeship to his mother; and in his leisure hours he composed a plea for Jacobitism, which he persuaded two of the workmen to set up in type, taking the copies as they were struck off into his own keeping. One of the men, named Vezey, gave information at Whitehall; and the Secretary of State issued a general warrant to arrest the accused and seize all papers found on the premises where he lived. Matthews was arraigned at the Old Bailey before ten of the judges on an indictment for high treason, and the fact of the printing and of copies of the proofs being found on the prisoner's person were not disputed. His younger brother was compelled to identify the handwriting of a letter to the Secretary of State, in which the prisoner admitted having written the pamphlet, but protested his innocence of having distributed it. The trial lasted till late at night, when the jury brought in a verdict of guilty, and sentence of death was passed. Even in times so hard the public were incredulous that the extreme penalty of the law would be passed. But after the lapse of a fortnight, when every incident had been duly weighed, this ineffectual offender was brought to Tyburn, and there offered as a sacrifice to the wrath of affronted power.

[1] Despatch to Secretary Craggs.—*MS.*

Stanhope watched still wistfully the policy of Spain. Alberoni's project of alliance against France and England was vast and splendid. He engaged Sweden, and sought to enlist Russia in his designs, which would have compassed the reunion of Philip's Italian and Spanish dominions. The Pretender was to be furnished with a great armament for the recovery of the English Throne, and the Regency of Orleans was to be overturned under the pretence of delivering young Louis XV. from captivity. Intelligence from Lisbon furnished details of the formidable armament concentrating in Cadiz Bay. Many Irish officers had left Madrid, and, it was said, had gone on board; 1,000 infantry and 1,000 horse, with field trains and stores for three months, were minutely described, and said to be ready for sea.[1] Stair grew uneasy at the aspect of things, and wrote: "With regard to the rumoured expedition, raise as many troops as you can, and have them ready. I think the Duke of Orleans is thoroughly in earnest to help us, but it is good not to want friends' assistance."[2] A Cabinet was specially summoned to consider what should be done. Marlborough was too ill to attend, but Grafton Kingston, Roxburgh, Kent, and Newcastle, Sunderland, Stanhope, Berkeley, Parker, Aislabie, and Craggs assembled at the Cockpit, and resolved on the issue of a proclamation offering £5,000 reward for the apprehension of Ormond, £1,000 for every nobleman attainted, and £500 for every M.P.

The intentions of Spain were still wrapped in doubt, and at the close of the session, words were put into the lips of George I., denouncing "the desperate and extravagant projects of one ambitious man that prevailed in the counsels of Madrid, which must occasion some expense and trouble, though not capable of causing fears to their neighbours. The acknowledgment of James III. would, no doubt, be received by every good Briton with indignation and contempt." But whether to show how illusory were Alberoni's threats, or how unessential the presence of his Majesty was deemed for the defence of the Kingdom, he was advised to remind Parliament that he meant to spend the recess in Hanover, where he could be of as much use as in England. Yet about the same time, to justify the cry for arming and coercion in Ireland, the Lord-Lieutenant issued a Proclamation

[1] Worsley to Craggs, 12th March, 1719.—*MS.*

[2] To Craggs, from Paris, 15th April, 1719.—*MS.* in Stowe Collection.

against the growth of Popery and the impending invasion by the Pretender. The members of the Cabinet were included in the Council of Regency, which asserted for the time the more ostensible functions of the Executive. They met three times a week, with Delafaye for their Secretary; and their proceedings, although with closed doors, had a certain character of publicity.

Instructions were given to fit out twelve additional ships of war. Meanwhile a Proclamation by James III. before setting out from Rome, was widely dispersed throughout the kingdom. He was coming, he said, to rescue the nation from the rule of a usurper, and to restore the ancient order of things. In the Capital and the chief towns journalists and booksellers were warned against circulating incitements to sedition; insurgent ballads were especially prohibited, and the voice of rebellious music was not suffered to be heard in the streets. All who offended were sent at once to jail, and the suspected authors of mischief had notice of prosecution.

Week after week, however, passed without tidings of the new Armada. Sinister alarmists could but surmise unlooked-for causes of delay; and practical politicians turned their thoughts to subjects of interest nearer home. In due time it became known from Corunna, where Ormond was to have gone on board, that he had written to Madrid announcing that half the fleet had been wrecked by a storm off Cape Finisterre, and that the troops placed at his disposal were too few and undisciplined for the contemplated enterprise.

Far from advising the expedition, he had been reluctantly drawn by Alberoni into accepting the command, which he resigned as that of a forlorn hope. Thenceforth no flatteries could induce him to embark again, in what Berwick and Bolingbroke already told him was a lost cause; and he allowed his friends in England to assure the Government of his intention to have done with reactionary politics and to live peaceably abroad if his private fortune were restored. His brother, Lord Arran, was eventually enabled by statute to repurchase his forfeited estates from the Crown; and he spent the long evening of his chequered life at Avignon, dispensing impartial hospitality to all English travellers of distinction who came that way.

CHAPTER VI.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

1719-23.

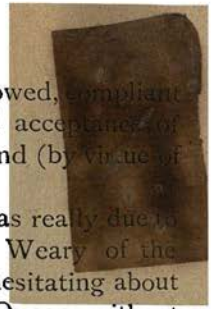
Bolton Lord-Lieutenant—Previous Viceroys—Phantom of Invasion—Chief Secretary Webster—Proclamation against Sarsfield—Nicholson Bishop of Derry—Condition of the Peasantry and of the Established Clergy—Position of the Presbyterians—Disabilities of Dissenters—Webster on the Irish Parliament—Appellate Jurisdiction—Judges Imprisoned—Final Statute of Appeals—Penal Code—Bolton's Proposals—Sunderland Groom of the Stole—Alberoni—Peerage Bill—Argyll Duke of Greenwich—Chancellor Brodrick—Expedition against Spain—Final Defeat of the Peerage Bill.

IN the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts administrative functions in Ireland were exercised mainly by Lord Deputies responsible directly to the Sovereign and removable at his pleasure. The intercept of the Commonwealth presented no exception to the rule. Elizabeth sent the most unstable, rash, and incapable of her favourites to reduce and govern Ireland; and when he failed, stung him by pitiless reproach into forfeiting his head upon the scaffold. Charles I. conferred plenary powers on Strafford to over-reach the Dublin Parliament in votes of Supply and unlawfully to enlist troops to be used against that of Westminster, and then to save himself sacrificed him to his foes. Cromwell named for his representative his colourless and submissive son, and James II. delegated to his brother-in-law for a time the vice-regal use of the prerogative. William commissioned Sidney to carry into effect the grants to himself and other favourites of great estates, kept dark from his English Ministers; and Anne, to get rid of her uncle Rochester, bade him go to Ireland and stay there as her Lieutenant. Ormond was a worthier choice. The nomination of Arch-

bishops, Chief Justices, and Generals commanding-in-chief was indeed reserved; but his patent empowered him to make Bishops, Judges, and Commissioners of Revenue, by formal recommendation to the Lord-Treasurer for the approval of the Queen, to whom alone he felt himself responsible.[1] He did what in him lay to retrieve the errors and mitigate the evils of past misrule. A chief among the nobles of the Pale, he would fain have ignored Celtic and Saxon antipathies. He was not a philosopher or a man of genius, but he believed in the maxim of Bacon, that they who cherish resentments keep their own wounds green; and as for political or religious predilections, he would as soon have thought in his executive capacity of frowning down a man on account of his opinions, as for his backing a different suit at cards. He had neither the ability to devise, nor the influence to carry measures of industrial renovations, and there was no Cabinet to whose collective judgment he could appeal for legislative aid. But he strove to bring about practical ameliorations. Commercial credit was paralysed, capital hoarded in silent fear, and investment in tillage, draining, or planting had come to be thought of as infatuation. In his despatches Ormond pleaded earnestly that Government should encourage the extending culture of flax, and the weaving and bleaching of finer fabrics in Leinster and Munster. Godolphin seems to have been convinced of the wisdom and duty of applying the same principles of trade to Ireland that were guaranteed to Scotland by the Union; but he found himself unable to withstand openly the fatuity of the time. As some amends, he bethought him of the expedient of creating a local sub-department at Dublin with the title of the Linen Board, which might be furnished with means by the local Parliament, and should be accountable only to them.[2] But the export trade to Great Britain and the Colonies of all descriptions of woven or printed goods was interdicted, and an Act was passed by the paramount legislature prohibiting the use of Irish sail-cloth in the Navy. For the purpose of obtaining supplies and lending a colour of justice to laws of sectarian jealousy and social rigour the provincial Parliament was now and then called together; but in both Houses the attendance

[1] Brodrick Correspondence, 1717.—*MS.*

[2] Treasury Minute of 4th September, 1706: Calender of State Papers: *Ibid.* 18th January, 1707.



was scant, reports of its proceedings were not allowed, compliant votes were not always obtainable, and the final acceptance of Bills drawn in Ireland but transformed in England (by virtue of Poyning's law) was not always certain.

The last of the Lieutenants whose authority was really due to the exercise of prerogative was Shrewsbury. Weary of the thraldom imposed by the Whig Junto, and still hesitating about committing herself to that of the Tories, the Queen, without asking leave, had conferred a Dukedom on Kent in lieu of the Chamberlain's staff, which she took from him and gave to unpartisan Shrewsbury, then for the first time acquainting Godolphin with her decision,[1] which he did not venture to disapprove. The lofty disdain her new favourite evinced for the narrowness and rancour of contending factions, led her Majesty three years later, when Ormond was sent to command the Army in Flanders, to name the Duke his successor in Ireland. Sectarian feuds were stifled, though not quenched, by his agnostic disfavour, and he refused inflexibly to allow Government influence to be used in any sense or form at elections, reproving sharply every attempt to compromise his absolute impartiality as Viceroy. His patronage, according to law, was necessarily confined to members of the Anglican Church, but the Catholic nobles and gentry were gratified by receptions at the Castle being held by his Italian wife; and Presbyterian hopes revived of a mitigation of their unjust exclusion from local privileges and rights of citizenship under the rule of him who had headed the invitation in 1688 to William of Orange. But appreciation of negative merits like Shrewsbury's would even among the better classes have taken long to grow, and personal popularity was too troublesome to earn, if in truth he did not despise it. The Dublin mob resented his indifference by caricaturing him as Caliban, from his accidental loss of an eye. Like all who preceded him, he spent more than half his time in England, leaving explicit instructions that the Lords Justices should neither in Parliament nor Council drop any hint of Government intentions; but should inform him fully from time to time on all matters, "that they might receive again *from him* the signification of her Majesty's pleasure."[2] The last articulate words of

[1] Letter from the Queen to the Lord-Treasurer, 13th April, 1710.

[2] Brodrick's Correspondence, 1st January, 1714.—*MS.*

Anne were to name Shrewsbury Treasurer, but after her death he agreed to make one of the new co-optative council that undertook for the future the thinking and directing duties of Government. Retaining only the gold key of Chamberlain, he resigned the uncoveted portfolio of Irish Minister, which Sunderland made a merit of putting up with, though he could not be induced to go over even to be sworn in. He named Lord Kildare, with Archbishops King and Vesey, Lords Justices, professing a desire to recognise native claims to trust and distinction, and Speaker Brodrick, in whose learning, good sense, and experience his main reliance lay, became Chancellor. Personal and party considerations soon outweighed pretences of regard for local susceptibility; Sunderland took to himself the lucrative post of Vice-Treasurer, Addison resumed his office of Chief Secretary, Gilbert, the family adviser in Lincoln's Inn, was made Irish Chief Justice, and the young Duke of Grafton, and Lord Galway were sent to supersede the head of the Geraldines, and their Spiritual Lordships of Dublin and Tuam. To enable the Chancellor, however, to take part in the deliberations of the Upper House the dignity of an Irish baron[1] was conferred upon him. Brodrick did not conceal his regret that the difficulties of Executive rule were needlessly aggravated by the change of hands, and Archbishop King "could not for the life of him see why they who knew the interest and state of the Kingdom, and were as heartily attached to his Majesty's service as any nobleman in England, should not be trusted with the government."[2] In the Cabinet quarrel of 1716 Sunderland gave up the Viceroyalty that Townshend might be thus got rid of as Secretary of State, and when he was at length persuaded to take the pay of absentee pro-consul he began by nominating King, Brodrick, and Speaker Conolly as his deputies in place of Grafton and Galway. From the first it was an unwritten rule that the Viceroy of Ireland, like the Secretary for Scotland, should be a member of the Cabinet. Townshend held the position but for a few months, and Bolton was named his successor.[3] No special instructions were probably deemed necessary by the new Vice-

[1] 13th April, 1715.

[2] To Primate Wake, 4th January, 1717.—*MS.*

[3] 14th April, 1717.

roy, who did not "go over"[1] until the beginning of autumn, till when the Lords Justices were expected only to mark executive time.

Although the Pretender had prudently declined risking his person in another descent on the Scottish coast, while neither in England nor Ireland any symptom of disturbance was seen, it was deemed expedient to keep alive suspicions of Jacobite plots, against which the Viceroy exhorted the Irish Parliament to consider measures for enlisting the Presbyterians on the side of the Church, and by fresh additions to the penal code to terrify the Catholics into mute submission. The two Houses replied in vague Addresses, promising to consider what was submitted to them. His previous experience had taught his Excellency little that was likely to be useful in the administration of Irish affairs, and instead of seeking confidential aid in someone qualified by ability or training to advise him, he named as his chief secretary a personal favourite who knew nothing of the country or the people. Of Mr. Webster nothing derogatory is recorded; and he seems to have been diligent enough in meddling with matters he did not understand. He was returned for the obscure borough of Carysfort, in Wicklow, and was made a Privy Councillor, but there is no trace of his having shown any capacity for business in Parliament, or any ability to cope with the difficulties, sectarian or judicial, that occupied both Lords and Commons at the time; and after a brief stay at Dublin he returned with his Excellency to England. It was thought a clever stroke of policy to take advantage of a too confiding vote of Supply for two years, instead of one, to defer the reassembling of Parliament for nearly the same space of time.

Misled by false rumours, a proclamation was issued denouncing Sarsfield (titular Lord Lucan) as head of a Spanish force, recently said to have landed in Ireland—whereabouts, Government was not sure—offering a thousand pounds reward for his seizure and a hundred pounds for every officer serving under him. All magistrates were charged to "search for and to seize all Popish Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Friars, Jesuits, and all others exercising any Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and to commit them to prison;" and to administer, rigorously, recent acts providing that none but Protestants should be petty constables or

[1] 5th August, 1717.

watchmen, and for the calling out of the Militia. The Statute for preventing the Further Growth of Popery was set out at length. All strangers and travellers unable to give a satisfactory account of themselves were to be lodged in gaol,[1] and numerous arrests on suspicion were consequently made. Despatches setting forth the vigorous measures taken were forwarded to Whitehall, and a garrison was held in readiness to act on receipt of the earliest intelligence; but the apprehended expedition, if ever contemplated, was nowhere seen in the offing, and Sarsfield was heard of no more.

On the outbreak of Mar's rebellion in Scotland in 1715, the Irish Presbyterians had, nevertheless, volunteered, regardless of the statutable penalties, to take arms in defence of the new dynasty; and they were publicly thanked for their zeal. The danger over, they asked for an Act of Indemnity, the reasonableness of which was at once conceded, and the heads of a Bill were brought in exempting Protestant Dissenters serving in the Militia or the Army, from the operation of the penal clauses of the Test Act. It passed easily through the Commons, but was defeated in the Lords; whereupon the Ulster Members appealed so effectively to the good sense and good feeling of their colleagues in the Lower House, that a protest and a warning in the form of Resolutions were forthwith adopted, that "those who had recently taken commissions in the Militia, or acted in the commission of array, had thereby done a seasonable service to Government; and that any person who should commence a prosecution against any Dissenter who had accepted or should accept of a commission in the Army or Militia, was an enemy to King George and the Protestant interest, and a friend to the Pretender."[2] No one ventured to prosecute; and the question left thus open, continued to be bandied between parties. Sunderland gave place as Minister for Ireland to Townshend, and Townshend to Bolton. Creeds were for politicians cards wherewith to play the game of power; and each was backed in turn as suited the holder. The Lord-Lieutenant, with the consent of his colleagues in the Cabinet, authorised an addition of £800 a year to be made to the *Regium Donum*. This could only be done in Committee of Supply on the motion of some

[1] *Dublin Gazette*, 18th April, 1718.

[2] "Irish Com. Journal," iv., 255.

member of the Government; but it was taken as an offering of first fruits and a pledge of better things to come by the Presbyterians, and assented to cheerfully by the Episcopal majority of the Commons.

In both branches of the local legislature there were able and sensible men who did not allow their sectarian predilections to blind them to the true policy of abrogating the Test and Corporation Acts, whereby Dissenters rendered themselves liable to severe penalties for bearing arms or appearing in military array to maintain order, or to resist rumoured invasion. Bishop Nicholson warned the English Primate of the folly of alienating the industrious and loyal settlers in Ulster, who had come over from Scotland, after the Revolution, to get bargains of land left vacant, and when their leases for thirty-one years expired, complained that their rents were raised, and sooner than submit they were emigrating to America in great numbers.[1] Bolton was urged by his colleagues in the Cabinet to throw all the weight of his influence into the scale of concession; and though unable to see their way in the same direction in England, beyond the repeal of the Schism Act, and a remission of penalties for disregarding municipal disability, they pressed him to obtain, if possible, from the Parliament of Ireland, a statute annulling altogether the system of Nonconformist exclusion there.

There is a remarkable letter of Secretary Craggs dictated by Sunderland when forwarding a Draft Bill to carry into effect his policy. It proposed an entire repeal of that part of the Test Act which required persons on taking any office or function, civil or military, to receive the Sacrament according to the rites of the Established Church; and placed the Presbyterians on the same footing as their brethren in Scotland. His Excellency was not prepared, however, to attempt the legislative fulfilment of his instructions. The Secretary might remember that, at Lord Sunderland's house last year, he had told him and Lord Stanhope that "if they proposed an entire repeal of the Sacramental Test Act in an Irish Parliament it would be found a matter of great difficulty, if not impossible to be obtained; and it would turn to the dishonour of the Government if anything of this nature were attempted without success. The Dissenters

[1] To Wake, 2nd June, 1719.—*MS.*

had been offered a legal toleration, but they seemed cool in the matter, hoping for an entire repeal." Some of the Privy Council were of opinion that it would be practicable to carry the desired repeal if Ministers in both Kingdoms heartily pressed it. But the dislike to the change by the majority of the House of Lords made the Chancellor doubtful of the issue. Sunderland suggested that some of the adverse Bishops should be sent for to know from them the sentiments of their brethren, as well as their own; and if the Test Act were not entirely repealed, whether the Dissenters might not be allowed to hold certain civil and military offices, and to worship God in their own way without being liable to persecution for doing so. The Lord-Lieutenant thought that most men would concur in doing something in their favour, though not so much as would fully answer their expectations. The Dissenters would be disappointed if they should grasp at a total repeal, swayed no doubt by the advice of the Chancellor. He thought it best that the Parliament should be allowed to frame the heads of a Bill, "for it was impossible to know how far gentlemen would go, rather than to send over a Bill which might be entirely lost."[1] The Commons declared that because of their attachment to the Act of Settlement and the Establishment, they would be glad if any means could be found whereby partial indulgence could be given the Dissenters, whom they regarded as supporters of the Constitution. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Attorney-General consequently brought in heads of a Bill for their relief; but a counter project was forthwith proposed by the less tolerant section, which the Presbyterians strongly objected to; and "it was astonishing what heats people were in upon the subject. The Viceroy could not but mark that people trying to carry Whig principles farther than they would bear or the Constitution would allow, were doing them more harm than their enemies. It made great caballing with people who were determined to give no ease to the Dissenters but purely toleration; so that there was no hope of carrying it so far as set down in the form proposed by Ministers to him. Even as regarded Militia and Justices of the Peace, he had grave doubts as to whither that would go; for Opposition would do their best to thwart it. By his letter to Sunderland Craggs would see that

[1] Bolton to Craggs, 27th June, 1719.—*MS.*

things were being driven to extremities. The Chancellor [illegible] not influence even his own son. He wished all the more [illegible] the heats in both Houses were over, as they greatly impeded votes for the payment of the troops; and he was anxious to pass the Money Bill."[1] Archbishop King offered the heads of the Relief Bill abolishing various sectarian disabilities, which, with the help of the Chancellor, he induced the Peers to accept;[2] and which was duly transmitted by the Viceroy for approval to England. When returned with the approval of the Cabinet, the Government lawyers were summoned to the Castle to rehearse their parts in order that there might be unison in support of the Measure in the Commons.[3] A warm debate arose in the Lords, Primate Lindsay declaring that schism was a damnable sin. The objection most insisted on was that the Dissenters were not to be obliged to subscribe any of the thirty-nine articles; but the measure was carried by 36 to 25.[4]

The Provincial Parliament and Judicature, though eloquent, and no doubt sincere, in their desire to emulate the paramount authorities of St. Stephen's and Westminster Hall in observance of constitutional forms, were not yet broken to go quietly in harness; and recent controversies ineptly provoked by Chancellor Parker did not tend to render them more docile. To the surprise of Bolton and his advisers, the Irish Judicial Bench, though comprising several English lawyers of eminence, asserted their exemption from overruling decisions by the English House of Lords; and laid down, as of undoubted authority, the principle of law that civil suits in Ireland could not be finally determined, save in the Court of Appeal in the appendant realm.

In the reign of Henry VI. the Parliament of the Pale, in assertion of its local autonomy, had statutably declared that "Ireland was, and always had been, incorporated within itself by antient laws and customs, and was only to be governed by such laws as by the Lords and Commons of this land in Parliament assembled were affirmed and proclaimed; that the realm had its

[1] To Secretary Craggs, 8th July, 1719.—*MS.*
[2] Lords' Journals, 31st July, 1719.
[3] Bolton to Craggs, 15th October, 1719.—*MS.*
[4] Chief Secretary Webster to Delafaye, 22nd October, 1719.—*MS.*

Royal Seal, and its own Constable and Marshal, before whom all appeals were finally determinable; yet, as orders had of late been issued under another Seal, and the subjects summoned into England to prosecute their suits before a foreign jurisdiction to the great grievance of the people, and in violation of the rights and franchises of the land, it was enacted that no person should be obliged by any commandment under any other Seal than that of Ireland to answer any appeal out of the said land, and that no officer to whom such commandment might come should put the same into execution, under penalty of forfeiture of goods and chattels, and payment of 1,000 marks, half to the King, and half to the informer."

A century later Poyning's Law had, as a matter of procedure, asserted a right in the Central Executive at Whitehall to exercise a preliminary discretion regarding the provisions of any new statute proposed in the Local Parliament, and the claim had been conceded. But Poyning's Law was not retrospective, and unless the Statute of Henry with reference to judicial immunities and obligations had been explicitly repealed, Chancellor Brodrick did not feel justified in acquiescing in the surrender of a jurisdiction whereof he was the specially appointed guardian.

On the 23rd September, 1717, it was moved in the Irish House of Lords that the question be put to the Judges whether an appeal lay from a decree of the Court of Exchequer in Ireland to the King in Parliament in Great Britain; and being put it was resolved in the negative.[1] From this small "rift within the lute" arose the discord, so long memorable, between the two jurisdictions, each claiming to be exclusive and supreme.

The Irish Peers appointed a Committee to inquire what relief should be given to the appellant Hester Sherlock, from a judgment against her claim upon the property of Edward Annesley under certain deeds and bequests. They reported, after hearing Counsel and examining witnesses, that the defendant was justly indebted to the plaintiff in the sum of £1,507, that certain lands in Kildare were chargeable with the sum, that the Sheriff of the County was the proper officer to levy the same; and that he should put her in possession.[2] The Chan-

[1] Case of Sherlock, Lords' Journals, Vol. II., p. 559.
[2] Lords' Journals, II., 569.

cellor concurred in the decision, which was warmly supported by his friend Archbishop Synge on national grounds; but opposed by a minority of the Peers.

The House of Lords at Westminster subsequently heard an appeal brought by the defendant Annesley, and sent by their own messenger their decree to the Barons of the Exchequer at Dublin restoring him to the unincumbered possession of his estate. The Court, not venturing to refuse, issued an injunction to the Sheriff of Kildare for the reinstatement of the defendant; whereupon the Irish House of Lords summoned the Barons of the Exchequer before them to know by whose orders they had acted; and remitted the fines on the Sheriff for refusing to execute the order of the Court. The Barons (Chief Baron Gilbert and Barons Pocklington and St. Leger) declined to answer questions tending to criminate themselves, and were committed to custody of Black Rod by order of the House; Midleton and some other Lords dissenting from this extreme exercise of Parliamentary privilege.[1]

Chief Secretary Webster had no sinecure in his post. But he thought the Session would be crowned with a happy conclusion, notwithstanding the difficulties which at the beginning of it seemed almost insurmountable. The contest in the House of Lords concerning their jurisdiction; the different views of gentlemen in the House of Commons with relation to the Dissenters' Bill; the additional weight of half-pay and pensions on the Establishment since the last Session; and their being obliged to make provision for seven regiments which were not in the Kingdom, besides the withdrawing of four more for the designed expedition against Spain, seemed to threaten great disturbance and opposition, and "had indeed made a great deal of pains and courtship necessary to keep some restless spirits in temper. So many things concurring to keep up the ferment and to create every day new jealousies, made him, upon reflection, think it a very important piece of news that the Public Debt and Establishment were provided for until Michaelmas, 1721, without any animadversion upon the pensions or the Administration. He could not but think that the Lords had pursued their resentment against the Barons of the Exchequer in a manner which would not be very serviceable to themselves; but as he

[1] Lords' Journals, Vol. II., 626.

was within their reach he would avoid saying more upon the subject."[1]

With the close of the Session, the captive Judges were set free; but Chief Baron Gilbert, who had creditably and popularly for seven years filled the chief post amongst them, imparted to Sunderland his desire to exchange it for a post of less titular dignity at Westminster. The First Lord of the Treasury remonstrated, but in vain, and could only persuade him to hold on for a season. In the Cabinet there was little if any difference of opinion on the main points at issue; and Chancellor Parker, to end the dispute, brought in a Bill declaring the supreme appellate jurisdiction to be in the British House of Lords. This was regarded in Ireland as another step towards centralisation; and political discontent was for a time fed by an assertion of judicial authority in which professional rather than national susceptibilities were offended. Midleton, while attending as Member for Midhurst the discussions in St. Stephen's Chapel on the Peerage Bill, had frequent opportunities of personal remonstrance with Ministers against the arbitrary tenour of Parker's measure. There is no reason to suppose that he would have objected to the constituting a Court of Appeal, such as happily exists in our day, wherein eminent judges of the Court of Session at Edinburgh and of the Four Courts at Dublin have seats; and in whose consultations their special knowledge of differential usages and specific enactments are always certain of a hearing before final decree. Such a tribunal would have been, next to the Triple Crown, the safest and most solid keystone of Imperial Union. When half a century later the discrepant States of America found it difficult to agree on other terms of confederation, no jealousy amongst them on this head threatened to mar the prospect of combination all felt to be indispensable for internal peace and external power. But neither equity nor policy shaped the measure adopted instead, which simply stamped out in scorn the judicial privilege of the Irish Peers who had presumed to assert their inherent jurisdiction. The Bill was not finally passed until the spring of the ensuing year;[2] but no attempt was made to question its overruling authority in Ireland.

In the two preceding reigns it had become a sort of practice

[1] Webster to Delafaye, 6th August, 1719.—*MS.*

[2] 6 George I.

with Government to endeavour to divert Protestant discontent by adding new provisions to the Penal Code. Every two or three years a Bill was brought in either at Westminster or Dublin to prevent, as was said, the further growth of Popery. The good sense and good humour of those who were charged with putting in force these various schemes of outlawry was constantly reproved by the Executive as unpatriotic indifference to the alleged peril of the State and the stability of the Established Church; and country gentlemen who winked at the neglect of their duty as magistrates in this respect chose to incur the reproach of covert leanings towards Jacobitism by standing up in Parliament against the intolerance they despised.

To tranquillise, however, the misgivings of those in Court and Cabinet who suspected the Irish Parliament of yearnings after legislative independency incompatible with the existing order of things, the Attorney and Solicitor-General were directed by the Viceroy to prepare the heads of a Bill "*for the better securing the Protestant interest in Church and State*," the adoption of which would serve to refute groundless suspicions and attest the accuracy of Bolton's assurances that no lurking tendency to either reaction or republicanism was to be feared. The draft, when revised by the Chancellor, consisted of no more than a recital of the leading clauses of the existing statutes, which few just then were prepared to impugn. It was laid upon the table of the Commons on the 14th of July; and after some desultory discussion was suffered to pass through all the necessary stages and remitted to the Castle for transmission to Whitehall. Ere that was done, however, Bolton insisted on two interpolations which changed essentially the character of the measure, against which his best advisers expostulated in vain, but regarding which their lips as Privy Councillors were sealed. The one would have seriously affected the legal relations between landlord and tenant, the other by resort to the penalty of degrading mutilation sought to deter the Catholic priesthood from the exercise of their religious functions. Midleton's repugnance to this barbarous proposal was, after repeated consultations, finally confirmed by a majority of those who were consulted; and but five officials who held their places at the will of the Executive could be induced to countersign the measure in its altered state. With other heads of Bills it was forwarded at last to the Secretary of

State,[1] with a dispatch from Bolton—the most revolting record of the worst period of international misrule—on the plea that liability to the punishment of branding failed to deter Seculars or Regulars from hearing confession, celebrating marriage, or saying Mass, and Government were told that if they wished to eradicate Popery and disaffection nothing else would do.[2] Few of the Cabinet were in town; and Secretary Craggs could only refer the iniquitous suggestion to Sunderland and Stanhope, with anxious inquiry as to what he was to say. Chief Secretary Webster wrote more than once urging the expediency of a speedy return of the project with approval, that it might be laid before both Houses in the form of a Bill before the prorogation, and deprecating the omission on the mere ground of humanity of any portion that might seem too severe.[3]

Stanhope was with the King in Hanover, and the correspondence shows that he spurned with contempt the addition proposed by Bolton without the cognisance of either House of Parliament. His opinion was expressed in such terms that the remnant of the Cabinet that remained in town were doubtful whether he contemplated the total rejection of the measure, or only the omission of the odious clause. Craggs wrote again:—

"We are all here pretty much of an opinion that in the orders you sent not to pass the Bill come from Ireland against Roman Catholics, you only meant to reject the ridiculous clause about the priests. I have some time since written to Lord Sunderland something of this matter, but if that has not procured an explanation before this reaches you, I am in hopes an answer to this may come time enough before the recess of the Irish Parliament to set that matter right, unless it is his Majesty's pleasure absolutely to reject the Bill."[4] Sunderland concurred with Stanhope, and the heads of the Bill modified at Whitehall in accordance with their advice were at length returned, through the Irish Under-Secretary, to his overruled Excellency at the Castle.

In the prescribed form they were brought in by Chief Secretary

[1] 25th August, 1719.
[2] See Appendix.
[3] To Under-Secretary Delafaye, 26th August, 1719.—Irish State Papers, *MS.*, 5th September, &c.
[4] Craggs to Stanhope, Cockpit, 22nd Sept., 1719.—*MS.*

Webster and passed rapidly in an almost deserted House of Commons. In the Upper House an unexpected combination of influences, territorial and episcopal, arose. A clause, which the heads of the anti-CatholicBill originally presented to Parliament did not comprise, had been inserted by the Viceroy and his dependents, while passing through their hands, and not having been struck out in England was now read for the first time by the Irish Peers. It sought to deprive Catholic leaseholders of the power to recover rent from their sub-lessees; and, in case of death or forfeiture, denied all legal or equitable claim of right on the part of occupier to the benefits of covenants regarding tenure, rent, or possession. It was, in fact, a ruthless blow aimed at random at what yet remained of legal security to the peasantry and farmers of the lands they leased or re-let; and being retrospective it amounted to an edict of widespread confiscation. Several of the bishops who were implicitly relied on for support, revolted against this new enormity. Archbishop Synge, accounting for the part they had taken, lamented, indeed, that there were some of his order "who would rather keep the Papists as they were in an almost slavish subjection, than have them made Protestants, and thereby entitled to the same liberties and privileges as the rest of their fellow subjects."[1] His way of winning adherents was by providing glebes for the Protestant clergy, and enforcing parochial residence, but he found only a half-hearted support among his mitred brethren, who, nevertheless, could not be induced to abet projects of spoliation as a substitute for missionary zeal. The temporal Peers were equally recalcitrant, in a matter savouring of reality so much more than the other portions of the measure. A majority hesitated to vote against the second reading; but in Committee it was moved that the leasehold clause should be omitted. The Chancellor explained that if any amendment of the kind were made after its transmission from England and adoption by the House of Commons, the measure would fall to the ground for the Session. A compact body of lay and spiritual Peers disregarded the warning, and carried the omission of the clause, whereupon the measure was declared to be lost, a few days before the prorogation, which, it was announced, would be for two years.[2] The salary of the Lord-Lieutenant was specifi-

[1] To Primate Wake, 19th November, 1719.—*MS.*

[2] Irish Lords' Journals.

cally charged on the wool licences, which were, in fact, all but prohibitory taxes imposed upon the sale of Irish wool for English manufacture; and the impolicy of which in depression of trade, is chronicled in the complaint of his Excellency that in the year 1719 they did not yield enough for his pay. In the preceding year the Vice-Treasurer had made up the £4,000 he was entitled to out of the general revenue, and the Duke requested "that a clause might be inserted empowering him, whenever the wool licences fell short, to make it up out of other funds." [1]

Midleton and King had long deplored the absence of officials in many of the local departments, causing the delay of necessary business. Of seven Commissioners of Revenue, only two were resident, not enough to constitute a quorum.

The practice of bestowing secular, as well as ecclesiastical, appointments in Ireland on the relatives and dependents of men in power, without any obligation to reside, naturally evoked, from time to time, bitter murmurs, by way of appeasing which Bolton had allowed his Chancellor of the Exchequer to propose a tax on absentee officials. But the produce of this illusory check amounted to no more than £4,624; and, before quitting the Castle, his Grace closed the book of his mal-administration by bestowing the lucrative post of Auditor-General on his younger son, Lord Nassau Poulett, who, it is needless to say, did not consider himself bound to live in political exile in Dublin.

On returning to England, his Excellency appointed Midleton, King, and Conolly his vice-Lieutenants for carrying on the Government. His presence was more needed just then at Westminster to aid his colleagues in their memorable struggle to carry the Peerage Bill; for the Poulett interest was strong in both Houses.

The insatiable longing for class domination was memorably bewrayed in the strange project of the Peerage Bill. So long as the lingering prestige of hereditary Royalty checked his presumption, Sunderland was what in later times would have been called a Radical; ready to widen sectarian enfranchisement, and to question or even snub the prejudices and preferences of Monarchy. But the political power of prerogative being dead,

[1] Treasury papers Calendar, 31st May, 1720.

so was his enmity, and the whims and foibles of the Court might be fed to fatness without scruple. Rough talk about corruption and jobbing in the House of Commons gave him little concern, the theories of equality among Dissenters troubled him naught, and their leading preachers were welcome to his table. Jacobite reaction must of course be threatened or trampled out, but for English Catholic squires he had no grudge, and of Irish Catholic peasants no fear. All his misgivings, suspicions, and hatred were absorbed by the few score men of his own class who were bold enough, or thought themselves clever enough, to wrestle with him for the mastery, and who, if they once got the Prince of Wales into their hands, might possibly prevail in the event of his coming to the Throne. That was a contingency to be provided against at any cost; and no device was deemed more sure than that of curtailing beforehand the power of creating Peers. William III. had disgusted the old English families by ennobling too many of his Dutch adherents; and Anne had scandalised Dukes and Earls of Norman blood by creating twelve coronets in a batch to prop a tottering Minister on a division. Such things must be effectually prevented in the time to come if the predominance of the Whigs was to be permanently secured, and the supremacy of the Cabinet in which Sunderland was over-lord was to be put beyond dispute. A Bill was accordingly prepared limiting the House of Lords to six beyond the then existing number. Twenty-six spiritual and 194 temporal Peers, with 16 Scotch representatives, were to form the Senate. In the reign of James there were but 176; on the accession of Anne, 192; and at the coming of George I., 209. In the four years of his reign there had already been added, beside numerous promotions, 21 members to the House of Lords. No motive less powerful or more indefensible than that of a desire to fetter the power of his successor would have overcome in the Royal breast the instinctive reluctance to cut down the chief remaining flower of the prerogative; but the temptation when insidiously presented proved irresistible. No little pains were taken to secure Irish support in various quarters. Bolton, over-confident in his personal influence, would seem to have engaged that Midleton would give his support as M.P. for Midhurst. When his Excellency first spoke of it, the Irish Chancellor did not relish the scheme, but he "refrained from

expressing himself strongly against it, being told that the King approved, and that the Ministry deemed it essential to the stability of the existing order of things. The Lord-Lieutenant did not show him the resolutions to be moved, so he was much in the dark." At a subsequent interview in London he told the Duke that he would not debate or vote at St. Stephen's, but that he was unconvinced of the reasonableness of the proposal.[1] Meeting him at St. James's, Sunderland said more than this would be expected of him, and hinted that if those in employment would not support, there must be a change of hands. What he meant he did not expressly say, but it seemed obvious.[2] Incredulous that one whom he had so long regarded as a personal friend and official adherent could diverge openly from him on a question of importance, Sunderland called on him at Thomas Brodrick's house in Privy Gardens and tried his utmost to gain him over, or at least to persuade him not to oppose. "The Whig majority," he said, "had preserved the constitution in Queen Anne's time, and this was the way to settle it. Ridiculous, not to say mad things would be done when a certain event happened." He professed great regard for Midleton, and would have him repeat what passed between them to his brother. The Chancellor desired leave to go for Ireland, as he did not wish to be present when the Bill came down to the Commons, but if there he must act upon his judgment. Sunderland said "the King would tell him his own thoughts."[3]

The Duke of Somerset was flattered by being asked to introduce a measure which directly tended to minister to his known pride in his order, wherein he acknowledged only his Grace of Norfolk as his superior in ancestral dignity. He had shut the door of office upon himself, in a fit of temper, on account of his son-in-law, Wyndham, whose leanings and prejudices he was not suspected of sharing; but in a moody, irritable way he had still continued to support the Whig interest in Sussex, and Westmoreland, where he had great possessions. His advocacy of a measure so difficult and questionable could not weigh for much; but his territorial wealth, historic rank, and numerous connections, were a gauge of triumph. To draw the Scotch

[1] Feb., 1719.—Brodrick *MSS.*

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Mem. in Midleton's handwriting; Brodrick *MSS.*

into compliance, Argyll was asked to second the introduction of the Bill. For his aid in compassing the Union with Scotland he had been granted an English earldom; and for this latter service he was to be created an English Duke. His part fulfilled, the promise was not broken; and for the next five-and-twenty years his votes were recorded as those of his Grace of Greenwich. A message from the King informed the House of Lords that "he had so much at heart the settling the Peerage on such a foundation as might secure the freedom and constitution of Parliaments in all future ages, that he was willing his prerogative should not stand in the way of so great and necessary a work." The Episcopal Bench could hardly fail to perceive that the legislative voice of the Church would gain rather than lose in relative importance from a change equally desired by Cabinet and Court. Oxford throughout opposed the Bill on constitutional grounds. Townshend and Cowper, freed from official obligation, took exception to the scheme as a violation of the Act of Union; Sunderland, Stanhope, Poulett, Buckingham, and Islay, with more than one of the Bishops, defended the measure; the Dukes of Montrose and Roxburgh contending that the interests of Scotland would be served rather than prejudiced by the addition of nine to her representatives in the Upper House, and that their brethren had no right to complain. On a division eleven resolutions forming the basis of the measure were carried by 83 to 30 votes. Nevertheless, the Scotch Lords petitioned to be heard at the Bar in defence of their rights; but their prayer was refused.

Ere a week elapsed the various sections of Opposition had interchanged danger-signals, promptly leading to confidential agreement, Wyndham and Shippen answering for the Tories, Walpole and Pulteney for the unofficial Whigs; but the soul of the movement was Steele, who had launched a new journal—*The Plebeian*—wherein, with his usual vigour, he denounced the indiscriminate disqualification of the landed gentry and richer middle class for ennoblement, whatever their individual merits or services might be; and called upon men of all diversities of opinion to combine against the threatened usurpation. A stereotyped order of nobility meant nothing less than the establishment of the worst form of oligarchic rule, without the power or the hope of mitigation by the natural way of fresh creations.

The pretence that the Monarch might work a tyrannic will by suddenly swamping the independent Peerage was a mere delusion. Since the Revolution the prerogative had been, by successive statutes, so shorn of its once dangerous powers as to be no longer an object of reasonable fear, and country gentlemen in the Commons who should desert the interest of their order were denounced with having in their pockets promises of being included in the compromising batch of coronets. Steele's analogies from the history of other States were not much to the point; and his jibes at the few county members who dreamt of being some day made Peers in reward for their quitting the hounds to attend the Ministers at St. Stephen's, made more people laugh than frown. But his constitutional reasoning was irrefutable. Addison's skill of literary fence was invoked on the other side. In default of better arguments, the *Old Whig* conjured up the danger of a capricious creation of Peers like that in the time of Anne; and asked why, if the number of one branch of the Legislature was fixed, that of the other ought not to be so too? The Commons having the power of the purse need never apprehend being overborne by the Upper House, or the Crown, or by both combined; and, affecting airs of dignity unworthy of him, Lady Warwick's husband scoffed at *The Plebeian*, the author of which, "to show himself a perfect master in the vocation of pamphlet-writing, talked like a son of Grub Street." Steele's rejoinder has been overpraised and overblamed, but he was naturally stung out of his self-control at the use of terms by a friend so old and intimate, which he could not but resent as "insolent and mean." The quarrel grew inappeasable, but the popular tribune won. Steele, placable as passionate, took readily to more congenial work. The invalid at Holland House turned aside from party conflict, which at heart he hated, to plan a tragedy on the death of Socrates and a work on Christian Evidences, neither of them adding to his fame, and *The Plebeian* ceased from troubling ere the *Old Whig* sank to rest.

To appease Opposition, Ministers offered that the Crown should renounce the prerogative of pardon after conviction of felony, and the Press their privilege of *Scandulum Magnatum;* while the Commons should be declared entitled to administer an oath to a witness at their Bar. None of these changes, however, were carried into effect, and witnesses before the Commons con-

tinued to be sent to the Upper House, or the Court of Chancery, to be sworn until 1871, when the anomaly was redressed by statute. Sunderland would have risked the unpopularity that must have increased by pressing the Bill upon the Commons during the Session; but Stanhope, always more given to yield, succeeded in dissuading him from making the attempt until the fall of the year. The King was impatient to go abroad, and on the 14th of April the Foreign Secretary made the announcement that as the tendency and intent of the provisions they proposed had been somewhat misunderstood, the Cabinet had resolved to let the question "lie still till another opportunity."

The relations of amity between France and England were curiously illustrated by those of the intimacy between their rulers. Dubois, whose collegiate *brevet* of Abbé implied no more than Deacon's Orders, had often tried through the Ambassador at Rome to obtain exalted station in the Church. Cardinal Trèmouille, Archbishop of Cambray, sent him only allocutions to reform his private life, and Père Lafiteau, the soul of the French Embassy, deprecated earnestly the impudent claim. Nevertheless, when the Regent was full of wine and lavish of promises that the Minister should have whatsoever he would, Dubois asked that he should be named for the next Cardinal's Hat. Even Orleans started at such a demand: "The only *Chapeau Rouge* that would suit you would be a *Bonnet de Fou.*" On New Year's Day the undaunted applicant once more pressed his suit. News had come that the Archbishop was dead, and he asked to be named his successor. "But you never had even Priest's Orders." Banter and serious objection on the part of his Highness were quenched in importunity, and it ended in a tipsy promise on oath that the shameless Abbé should have the See. In vain upon the morrow the Prince sought to be released from an obligation which he feared would render him ridiculous. A bright idea, Dubois said, came to his aid. "I will obtain from the King of England a pressing letter by which you will be solicited to grant me this Mitre as a recompense for the services I have rendered in the Triple and Quadruple Alliances." Orleans exclaimed, "It would be ludicrous that a Protestant King should ask for a Catholic Archbishopric for an Abbé of your sort!" The candidate, however, insisted that a letter drafted by him and signed by George I., would have the desired

effect. The form was forthwith prepared and forwarded to London, with letters from the writer to his friends Stanhope, Stair, Destouches, and all who could make the wheel go round. The Secretary was too anxious to secure the good offices of his old confidant in preserving the alliance they had conjointly brought about, to hesitate. With the help of Sunderland, he obtained the assent of the King, and the expectant prelate records with satisfaction that in due time the Royal recommendation came back from England with no addition but the Sign Manual. Thus equipped, he sought the Regent, who said, "I consent because I must make you Archbishop; but who will you get to make you a Priest, not having taken clerical vows?"[1] He found little difficulty, however, in having himself formally ordained and thereby made eligible to misappropriate the Crozier of Cambray.

The Regent, to propitiate the Court of Madrid, and relying on his influence in England, undertook that whatever George I. had promised should be performed. The Queen of Spain took the King's letter from her cabinet and showed it to the French Ambassador, and a special Envoy was sent to London to ask for the redemption of the Regent's pledge. The counter feeling had by that time waxed so strong that the Cabinet dared not recognise the unaccepted proffer as binding on the part of his Majesty; but Stanhope took occasion in the House of Lords to hint at the possibility of a Bill to give the Crown a discretion to yield what was asked on certain conditions. An outbreak of angry feeling warned the Secretary not to proceed, and he advised Sir Luke Schaub at Paris that just then the demand would be futile, and would probably end only in an enactment that would prevent Ministers ever making the attempt.[2] Stanhope himself visited Paris, and presented a letter from the King acknowledging his original suggestion, in order to avert a war, but that the conditions not having then been fulfilled, he could not renew it in the existing temper of the nation. Nevertheless, Stanhope, in a despatch to Craggs from Hanover, recommended the Lords Justices to consider whether Gibraltar might not be exchanged for Florida or one half of St. Domingo if the compensatory cession could be secured. Spain refused, and the design fell to the ground.

[1] Dubois Mem. [2] 28th March.—*MS.*

Vague rumours prevailed that M. de Torcy was scheming a secret Treaty between France and Spain, and Newcastle, who was covetous of being informed of all that was going on in other departments, learning that Stanhope had left suddenly for Paris without saying why, wrote a wheedling letter to his private secretary to beg that he would tell him all about it. "Dear Charles had been so exceedingly good to him that he could not forbear troubling him on every occasion. He might be assured, *however secret* the objects might be, he would not disclose them to anyone living."[1]

The Dutch had made it a condition of their joining the Quadruple Alliance that they should enjoy the same freedom of trade with Sweden as ourselves; but, having delayed their accession until after our Treaty with Sweden was signed, the Government could only direct Carteret, at Stockholm, to use the utmost efforts to bring about that object. The young diplomatist speedily proved that he was well chosen for the embassage of peace; and though at first he was unable to propitiate the wayward ruler of Muscovy, his address in conciliating the other maritime Powers, and the care he took to let his hand be overseen, spread by degrees the general persuasion that the English Cabinet sincerely meant what they said—the tranquillity of the Baltic, and the mutual security and liberty of trade. It was a merit which, like too many others, found little appreciation save in the abstract, and so little was thought of a policy merely useful, that it was deemed expedient to strengthen the squadron under Norris, and carefully repel the imputation that Great Britain could be wheedled into engagements of mere reciprocity. Peace between Denmark and Sweden was subsequently brought about by Carteret, acting on instructions from home, and Russia found herself isolated among the Northern Powers. The Czar refused any offer of mediation from Norris or Carteret, and letters from the former to the commandant of Revel were, by order from St. Petersburg, sent back unopened. At the same time an invading force under Mengden landed on the Swedish coast, burnt the town and forty adjacent villages, and, having ravaged the country round, departed.

The summer and autumn of 1719 were devoted to fitting out expeditions, in concert with that of France, against Spain. A

[1] *MS.*

fleet was despatched from Spithead with 4,000 men on board, under Lord Cobham, to surprise Vigo, known to be without a garrison, and to capture the remains of the arms and stores that had escaped Ormond's expedition. In Sicily no better fortune attended the forces of Spain, and the warlike Cardinal sent an Embassy to Paris in quest of peace. Dubois persuaded the Regent to refuse negotiations without previous sanction from Vienna and London; and the diplomatic *venue*, as lawyers would say, being transitory, the proposal was remitted forthwith to Hanover. Thence Stanhope replied that the preliminary conditions of peace must be the dismissal of Alberoni, forasmuch as he had proved, regardless of treaties, fathomless in dissimulation, pitiless to Princes with whom his master was not at feud, and boundless in his ambition to reconstruct the map of Christendom. Various influences were brought into concurrence for the overthrow of the friendless Minister, and when all was ready he received, without warning, a letter of dismissal from Philip, who never saw him more, and who bade him quit the Kingdom within twenty-one days. His small offences were forgotten in the recollections of the great things he had done, and his levée ere he left Madrid was more crowded than any in the height of his power. But Alberoni was crushed and cast away, for was he not a gardener's son? Stanhope was glad to hear of his fall, as an essential step in the good work of peace.[1] M. Grimaldi, who succeeded Alberoni, sought the first opportunity of reconciliation. The Regent became the active mediator between the Courts of London and Madrid, and once more hinted the restoration of Gibraltar as best fitted to soothe the wounded pride of a people but yesterday intoxicated with dreams of recovering mediæval greatness. George I., who held fast by the acquisition of Bremen, cared little about giving up the great fortress; and his Foreign Minister having recently assented to its restitution, could not abruptly affect to treat it as impossible, provided Parliament could be convinced of the value of some equivalent. Ministers instinctively shrank, however, from broaching the question at Westminster, and the presence of external danger having palpably ceased, Stanhope preferred to adjourn from time to time any definite language, while using conciliatory terms on every other point in dispute. His policy was so

[1] General Stanhope to Dayrolle, 11th Dec., 1719.—*MS.*

obviously aimed at securing the interests of the Kingdom that he had seldom any difficulty in bringing either his Royal master or his Cabinet colleagues to agree with him. In the unworthier duty of submitting for Sign Manual the daily increasing number of jobs and exactions his patience was sorely tried. The summer visit of the Court to Göhrdt was the golden opportunity for local extortion; while the close of the Session and the desertion of London by unprofessional politicians was equally propitious for jobbing. The Secretaries of State condoled with each other on their helplessness to check the evil of which they were ashamed. In fits of vexation the General would sometimes threaten to resign, and plausible Craggs would rejoin that he was ready to stand out for the honour of the public whatever happened. But all that is clear now is that in their time the warp and woof of Government patronage were thickly embossed with corruption whichever way the Executive shuttle flew, and that Ministers bore the infliction with dutiful fortitude. Let the younger Secretary of State tell the tale:

"You see that at the rate we are now going on, Lord Stanhope is on the point of resigning every day. It is possible that his friends may continue in, out of pure respect to the King; but without hoping to do the least good, and thus becoming certain victims to a useless point of honour. Believe me, my friend, consult with the Duchess and Lord Stanhope and exert your utmost efforts; for nothing worse can happen than what I foresee. My most humble and sincere compliment to the Duchess. Show her this letter, which will save her the trouble of one from me. It is incredible what prejudice all these sales of Offices and other underhand dealings occasion; for, to complete our misfortunes, I have remarked that there is no distinction of persons or circumstances; Jacobites, Tories, Papists, on the Exchange or in the Church, by land or by sea, during the session or in the recess,—nothing is objected to provided there is money. You see that I write pretty freely to you. I have burnt your letters. Should you show mine there is not a thought of which I am ashamed, nor any consequences that I dread. But as long as we are in the boat we must pull with all our might, and meet difficulties only to surmount them. I desire you will continue your information with the same punctuality. Among the very few reasons which induce me to

support the burthen of business as well as I am able, the hope of being one day of some use to you is not the least." [1]

Would Craggs, with all his reliance on Marlborough House, have seemed to trifle thus with official fortune had he not been successfully redeeming the time by securing allotments in South Sea Stock? The spirit of the inner Cabinet was vexed at the prevalence of jobbing all round, that profited nothing to Government in general or exalted persons in particular; and they would fain have kept the German dependents of the Court in more awe of the frown of the chief of the ladies there. Craggs wrote implicitly what Sunderland bid him. *Imperium in imperio* could only be kept up in vital force by the unfailing interchange of candid thoughts between mutual confidants when near or afar; and the recognition of like aims and misgivings by one another.

Although no rupture had actually taken place with Russia, the relations between the two Governments were often strained. Bernsdorff and his colleagues lost no opportunity of keeping alive distrust of the Czar, and urging upon the Elector the policy of drawing closer to Sweden. Without openly adopting their views, the Cabinet were understood to be passively favourable, and Lord Carteret's mission to Stockholm was confessedly intended as one of sympathy, if not of support, to the new Queen. M. Veselofsky told Stanhope that even a defensive alliance with Sweden would be considered by Russia a declaration of war. The Secretary of State complained, on the other hand, of something more than hospitalities shown to the partisans of the Pretender, some of whom had been given commissions in the service of the Czar; and likewise of the restrictions on trade recently imposed without necessity or explanation, to the surprise and injury of British merchants. Seeing the friendly aid we had rendered during the war in several important respects, more consideration might have been shown; but if there was no wish to make a quarrel, he was ready to negotiate fresh terms of a reciprocal treaty of commerce that must be beneficial to both nations. The Tartar envoy asked haughtily what services great Britain had rendered under the flag of neutrality during recent hostilities. Stanhope replied that without interposition or protest by us, Peter had been

[1] To Under-Secretary Schaub, then at Hanover, 30th June, 1719.

allowed to make great conquests, and to establish his authority on the shores of the Baltic. Veselofsky rejoined that Great Britain had suffered only what she had no power to prevent, and that her fleet had hitherto been employed to protect the integrity of Denmark and her own trade in those waters, but in no sense to further the interests of Muscovy. London merchants engaged in the Baltic trade were worked upon by agents of the Russian Embassy to deprecate war; and were propitiated by promises that if it were averted, relaxations of high duties would be made in favour of English, Dutch, and even Swedish traders. A deputation to Whitehall inquired how they ought to act, and were assured that they might safely freight their vessels as before without apprehending hostilities; but on their recurring to their clandestine adviser he gave them plainly to understand that a rupture was imminent and, consequently, their danger great. Meanwhile Carteret had been instructed to offer mediation between his Czarish Majesty and the Queen of Sweden; and to intimate that the Regent of France was ready to become a party to a general pacification. Lord Whitworth was sent to Berlin to bring about a better understanding between Prussia and Hanover. But Bernsdorff wished his family estates on the Elbe to be transferred to the Electorate; and for this he was ready to prolong negotiations indefinitely. Stanhope assiduously strove to baffle his design.

Count Tolstoi did his utmost to dissuade Frederick William I. from adopting the treaty, and a curious minute is preserved in the secret archives recording his Majesty's reluctance to seem indifferent to the interest of his great neighbour, with whom he desired to live in friendship. "Would to God that I had not promised to conclude the treaty. It is an evil spirit which has moved me. Now we shall be ruined, which is what my false friends wish. May God take me from this evil world before I sign it, for here on earth there is nothing but falsehood and deceit! I will explain to Golofkin that I must wear the cloak on both shoulders. To have the Czar at hand is my interest, and if I give him money, I can have as many troops as I wish. I pray God to stand by me if I must play an odd part. I sign the treaty, but I shall not keep it; and when I throw away the mask shall tell the whole world how false friends have treated

me."[1] The treaty with England was signed June, 1719, that with Sweden soon afterwards. By a subsequent act, to which Denmark also was a party, the successor of Charles XII. renounced all conquests in Germany. Bremen and Verden were annexed to Hanover; Livonia, Esthonia, and Finland were restored to Sweden.

Bernsdorff, resenting his exclusion from all share in the direction of English politics, retained a certain ascendancy in Hanoverian affairs, which greatly troubled the Ministry. While they were strengthening the guarantees of peace, which the Quadruple Alliance promised, by seeking to reconcile differences between other Powers and Prussia, the aged Chancellor was clandestinely negotiating, in the Elector's name, for certain advantages desired by the Emperor at the expense of the ambitious House of Brandenburg, regarding whom the Aulic Council already cherished not unfounded fears. Bernsdorff relied on his being able to secure his master's assent, when ratified by Austria; and, believing himself strong enough to effect his purposes, he kept them dark from the Secretary of State and the Duchess, whose information was derived from means of espionage neither could avow. The Envoy of England at Berlin, resisted all attempts to win him over to the Hanoverian scheme; and at last things looked so critical that Sunderland's presence at Göhrdt became earnestly desired by both the Minister and the Mistress, who were entirely in accord.

"No scheme was ever framed so impracticable, so dishonourable, nor so pernicious as what this old man has in his head. He proposes, beside part of the spoils of Prussia for his Master, to get for himself certain Baillages situated about Wismar. I continue to carry it fairly towards him, and to live just as we used to do. One would have hoped that what had lately been done for him would have satisfied him; but you may depend upon it, he will do us all the mischief he can. I think that we shall weather this danger, and it may then deserve consideration whether we should endeavour to get him left here when the King returns. The Duchess is bitterly incensed against him, and would go any length; but I advise her to do nothing precipitately till we know the sense of our friends in England.

[1] Life of Droyen, quoted by Schuyler.

I have learned what I know of it in such a manner as I cannot acquaint the King with; but I have let her Grace into it, and by her assistance I hope we shall baffle it. You will see by my despatch to Craggs, the confused situation of our affairs. The old man grows worse."[1]

Sunderland congratulated his colleague on overcoming so many difficulties, and announced to him the taking of St. Sebastian by the French. Another man-of-war of 70 guns had been sent to reinforce Norris and make him strong enough to deal with the Muscovites, who "though more numerous were but sad wretches at manœuvring a ship; and their case, if there were an action, would be like that of the Spaniards" off Syracuse.[2]

He rejoiced at the Treaty with Sweden, which would enable the allied fleets to join in crushing that of the Czar. He was provoked at the difficulties made by Norris, but not surprised, never expecting better from him, "for he was one of those unreasonable, blustering men that made a great noise and were capable of doing nothing. For God's sake let positive orders go to him forthwith to join the Swedes, and not lose the opportunity now the Czar's fleet was in a pound in the river of Stockholm. This was the opinion of the Lords Justices; and if the Admiral should persist in making his difficulties, the King should send express for Sir John Jennings to take the command. Compliments to the good Duchess."[3]

Somewhat later Stanhope was felicitated on the signing of the Prussian Treaty, which crowned his diplomatic successes in the North as well as the South, and made Great Britain Mistress of the affairs of the Baltic, for which he would get great credit as being the projector and founder of the peace.

Throughout his career, Stanhope was the firm and faithful friend of an anti-sectarian policy. He was ever watchful of opportunity to do something that would mitigate the hardships under which quiet and loyal Catholics laboured. The fears and enmities of Party knew no discrimination; every Catholic was said to be a Jacobite, and every Jacobite a rebel. Foreign emissaries drove a perilous but desultory trade in disaffection;

[1] To Sunderland, August, 1719.
[2] Sunderland to Stanhope, 31st July, 1719.
[3] *Ibid.*, 4th August, 1719.

but without pecuniary supplies from France or Spain, their machinations only resulted in bringing them into trouble. The Secretary of State had such confidence in the fidelity of the French Regent, and so little fear of Spain, that he resolved to try whether the wealthier and better educated Catholics might not be detached from the desperate cause of the Stuarts.

A return of the estates of Roman Catholics in England and Wales, stated the annual value (exclusive of demesne lands) to be £382,775; and if they were compelled to pay on two-thirds this would yield a considerable sum. There were some four or five hundred persons who had not set forth the rental of their properties, which a proposed law would oblige them to sell lest they should bear local help in future disaffection.[1] Stanhope recoiled from the undiscriminating injustice and purblind oppression he was unable to avert, and he strove in other ways to make some amends. He succeeded in engaging the Emperor's interposition with the Pope to publish a Decree on behalf of British subjects, whereby they might take the Oath of Allegiance in a form not impinging on Catholic faith or morals. With this view, a confidential paper was prepared for approval by leading Catholics in England setting forth the conditions of submission and fealty, without whose observance they could not hope for any relaxation of the Penal Laws; and a copy of which was taken by Secretary Craggs to a conference, where it was approved by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Waldegrave, Mr. Charles Howard, and other eminent persons of their communion by the advice of the Rev. Dr. Strickland. It was forwarded to Vienna and Rome; and orders were sent to the Nuncio at Brussels for the publication of an Oath disclaiming a belief in the power of the Church to depose Princes. One of the stipulations was the removal of Cardinal Gualtieré, a known Jacobite, who assumed the function of Protector of England; and another was an engagement to suspend any Bishop within the realm who should give just offence to the Government. But the negotiation came to nought, and was not renewed for half a century.

During the recess rumours prevailed that the Peerage Bill would be revived in the following Session. Thomas Brodrick

[1] The return is signed J. Cosins, 19th January, 1719.—*MS.*, Record Office.

advised his brother that his presence at Westminster would be both advisable and necessary, though he felt that it would not be a matter of pleasure or satisfaction to some. He thought the Peerage Bill would be resumed. The attempt had put the people in every part of the Kingdom into such a ferment as might (at least, in his opinion, should) make the great men consider well before they added fuel to a fire already kindled.[1] But, elated with Stanhope's diplomatic success, the Cabinet thought they would be strong enough to carry their scheme for divesting the Crown of its chief remaining prerogative. Newcastle was glad to find that Sunderland and Stanhope were all for pushing the Bill.

Everything ought to be prepared that would be an inducement. Craggs would school them that this Bill was as good as could be, a solid advantage to the party, and agreeable to the public advantage. He was not of the same opinion respecting the repeal of the Septennial Bill, for he thought they would evidently lose much more than they would gain by it. He was sure it would not make the Peerage Bill go down better. Some who were very good friends to the latter would thoroughly oppose the former, and though they had but small chance with some lords, yet that undoubtedly would make them the more determined. He had taken the liberty to tell Lord Sunderland, when he dropped something of that kind, that he found it had displeased some of their friends. The merit of having settled a universal peace in Europe would make the King so popular that he might have whatever he pleased, and his steady adherence to the Whig interest must and would make that unanimous on their side. He was of opinion that Government would not fail of a better Parliament than the present, providing that they did not disoblige the Party by parting with it sooner than its time. He would undertake himself for the maintenance of sixteen votes; many others would do the same, and if on such an occasion the Prince would think it worth while to use some proper method, they could not fail. The great point he thought they ought to aim at was that there should be but two parties, that for and that against the Government; and by a new election Mr. Walpole, his friends, and his party would be so incorporated with the Jacobites that they would have but little difficulty in dealing

[1] Rt. Hon. T. Brodrick, M.P., from Peper Harow, 30th Aug., 1719.—*MS.*

with them.[1] Sunderland and Stanhope would probably have been willing to purchase the Peerage Bill with the repeal of the Septennial Act; while Newcastle and others of the party were reluctant to incur once more the heavier tax of frequent elections. Government resorted to every method during the autumn calculated to prevent independent Members losing their way. Inducements, we are told, were freely lavished, promises and threats were alternately employed.

They declared that the inevitable consequence of the rejection of the Bill would be the ruin of the Administration. But not a few of their best supporters were incredulous; and even among the holders of office some proved inexorable. Chancellor Midleton had incurred the distrust and disfavour of the Lord-Lieutenant by the countenance he had given in the Irish Parliament to the rejection of his Excellency's Bill to prevent the further growth of Popery; and he made no secret of his continued aversion to the Peerage Bill.[2] But, on questions so critical, the most remarkable disclosure of the state of the Ministerial mind is that contained in a letter of Stanhope's from Hanover on the eve of the Session, owning, with candour almost feminine, his readiness for one to give up the Septennial Act (not yet three years old), for sake of the Peerage Bill, and confessing his private belief that, after all the fight they had made for it, that memorable effort of legislation was not really worth keeping or capable of being eventually kept. If their friends demurred to surrendering the extension they had given themselves of their legislative lease, he was ready to hold by it; but could they not be converted back to the faith as it was in Triennialism? Whatever their differences might be in Cabinet or party, let them agree to be unanimous, for such a chance would never occur again, and they all knew how much their good master had it at heart, for reasons especially his own. On the plea of showing how entirely George I. was in the hands of his Minister, Sunderland demanded the Garter and it was forthwith given him. From Hanover Stanhope wrote that Lord Stair, contrary to his custom, assured him confidently that Spain would speedily submit to terms. Even the Czar was said to put water in his wine. "Thus we have a reasonable prospect of peace both in the

[1] Newcastle to Stanhope, 14th October, 1719.—*MS.*

[2] To his brother, 21st Nov., 1719.—*MS.*

South and in the North before next spring. This situation of affairs will probably put our friends in good humour at the opening of Parliament, and it seems to us here very advisable to make the best use possible of this good turn by getting the Peerage Bill passed, which, if dropped or delayed, must in my poor opinion be looked upon as lost for ever. I beg of you to think of what has been suggested from hence touching the Septennial Act. If you think we can carry the Peerage Bill without the assistance of so strong an argument *ad hominem* as the continuing the present House will be to them, it will be pretty indifferent to me whether we meddle with the Septennial Act or not, though I will confess to your Grace that I think it for the interests of our country to repeal it if it stood singly upon its own merits. But however that may be, I shall readily submit my opinion touching it to our friends, because I think there is no danger in delaying it. On the contrary, I am persuaded that it will, at some time or other, force its way. But the Peerage Bill is of a very different nature. I think we must carry it now or never, since it will probably never happen again, that both a King and a Ministry will be for it. Nobody can be so mad as to think of proposing any fixed resolution upon matters of that consequence without knowing accurately the sense of friends in England. If what is designed as a service to this House of Commons and the Whig Party be taken otherwise by them, it must undoubtedly be dropped; but if they are against repealing the Septennial Act I shall have very little hope of succeeding in the Peerage Bill. When you shall see our good master you will learn from himself how much he has at heart not to be baffled a second time in this matter. I am very glad to find your Grace so sanguine upon the choice of a new Parliament; but it will come too late if the Peerage Bill be not passed in this. If there be any difference of opinion among us it seems to be which is the best and most certain way to come at it; but all private opinions must submit to what appears to be the sense of the bulk of our friends in the House of Commons."[1]

Exulting in the triumph of their Foreign policy, the Cabinet indulged in accents of patriotic joy. From the Throne they told Parliament that "It had pleased Almighty God so to strengthen our arms that we might reasonably promise ourselves

[1] Stanhope to Newcastle, 27th Oct., 1719.—*MS.* British Museum.

to reap very soon the fruits of our successes." On the 25th of November the Duke of Buckingham reintroduced the Peerage Bill, and a few days later it was read a third time without a division and sent down to the Commons. Ministers, over-confident in their strength, proceeded to debate their memorable project without any usual mustering of supporters; while energetic means were employed by Walpole and Pulteney—knit firmly for once with their habitual opponents, Shippen, Wyndham, and Bromley—to rally resistance to a charge which it was only doubtful who amongst them hated it most. Jekyll and West lent all the aid of their learning to the cause, and Steele was versatile and vigorous as ever.

The measure, they said, had its origin in no temporary need of Ministerial strength in the Upper House, as was plainly shown by the unanimity of its reception, but in a design permanently to alter the balance of the Legislature. The strongest argument against it was that it would not only be a discouragement to virtue and merit, but would subvert the constitution by causing one of the three Powers, now depending on one another, to preponderate in the scale. The Crown was dependent upon the Commons by the power of granting money; the Commons were dependent on the Crown by the power of dissolution; the Lords would now be made independent of both. Was casual abuse of prerogative a sufficient reason for annihilating it? Under that consideration, the power of dissolving Parliaments ought to be entirely taken away, because that power had been more abused than any other. How could the Lords expect the Commons to give their concurrence to a Bill by which they and their posterity were to be for ever excluded from the Peerage? If the pretence of this measure were that it would tend to secure the freedom of Parliament, there were many steps more important and less equivocal, such as the discontinuance of bribes and pensions. That it would secure the independence of Parliament they totally denied; it would secure a great preponderance to the Peers; it would form them into a compact impenetrable phalanx by giving them the power to exclude, in cases of extinction and creation, all persons from their body who might be obnoxious to them. If gentlemen would not be convinced by argument, at least let them not shut their ears to the example of former times; let them recollect that the overweening disposition of the great Barons to

aggrandise their own dignity led them to exclude the lesser Barons; and to that circumstance might be fairly attributed the sanguinary wars which so long desolated the country.

Walpole, in a pamphlet entitled "Thoughts of a Member of the Lower House," &c., in temperate but telling plainness of language, argued effectively against the project. But reluctance was shown by many to oppose the Government, as was said, ineffectually, and strenuous efforts were made to bring about a compromise, if not surrender. In a conference at Devonshire House, Walpole found at first but little response to his energetic appeals; and, as Speaker Onslow used to tell, sharp altercation arose. Devonshire, Townshend, and Cowper were known to take Walpole's view, and he declared that though he stood alone he would continue to oppose at every stage. His trenchant persistency prevailed, and before the second reading the aspect of matters was visibly changed. He had no heartier support than that of Duchess Sarah,[1] with whom Sunderland had no longer the influence of a son-in-law. But had it been otherwise, the sagacity and the pride of the woman would assuredly have made her take the wise and constitutional side in the controversy, and, having taken it, to back it with all the influence at her command. And if anyone ventured to remind her Grace that Royalty leant the other way, nothing would have been more likely to put a fine edge on her opposition than the hint of legislative dictation by the ill-informed foreign gentleman at St. James's, whom she used to call "her neighbour George."

Impatient at the prospect of resiliency where compliance had been arrogantly counted on, the new Lord Keeper was said to have given vent to his amazement in terms more savouring of petulance than expostulation. But Midleton, after all the arguments he had heard in public and private, thought Parliament ought to forbear from such a fundamental change, and the Member for Stockbridge, without whose sympathy he seldom thought or acted, concurred in his decision.

Once more the head of the Treasury tried his power of personal suasion with the Irish Chancellor, but alternate blandishments and reproaches failed to bring the Member for Midhurst to compliance; and he calmly intimated that his sense of duty

[1] Letter to Mr. Hare with reference to her subsequent quarrel with Walpole, September, 1726.

being clear he must abide the consequence, whatever it might be. The imperious Minister, unused to tolerate what he chose to deem insubordination, forgot alike dignity and prudence.

> "His captain's heart
> Which, in the scuffles of great fights, had burst
> The buckles on his breast, reneged all temper."

In the vehemence of passion, a blood vessel in his head gave way; he was with difficulty removed to his house, and futile expostulation was not resumed.[1]

Though Walpole did not, in so many words, accuse the Cabinet of a design to divest the Prince of Wales of this branch of his inheritance, it was universally believed that the King's jealousy and aversion had been played upon in order to obtain his consent, and every shaft feathered with this suspicion went home.

Class feelings thus aroused proved stronger than the bribes and bonds of party. Unplaced Whigs combined with displaced Tories to resist an innovation that would have tended to bar the way of individual ambition. The Outer Guild, though generally docile enough under dictation, rallied to the flag of mutiny, and the Inner Guild was discomfited and disowned.

Lechmere, Craggs, and Aislabie, not yet tottering to his fall, did what in them lay to rally the supporters of Government, but they numbered on a division no more than 177 in a crowd, rarely known, of 450 Members. The blow was crushing, and the victory complete. Walpole had saved his order, and from that day his personal importance was ensured.

[1] Brodrick Correspondence, IV.—*MS.*

CHAPTER VII.

GRAFTON VICEROY.

1720-24.

Grafton hesitates about going to Ireland—Official Absenteeism characteristic of the Time-Judges and Bishops not to be made from "Natives"—Prohibition of Irish Linens—Madam Kilmansegge to be made a Denizen prior to Ennoblement—Wood's Half-pence—Precedents—The Customs Board Petition against the new Medium—Boarding a Vessel in Cork Harbour and seizing the "Mock Money"—The Irish Lords and Commons address the King.—Treasury Commission to analyse the Tokens—Division in the Cabinet—The Brodricks—Walpole and Grafton—Exemplification of the Patent—Brodrick's son moves a Vote of Censure—No Popery Bill—Position of Midleton—The Drapier's Letters.

THE choice of the young Duke of Grafton for Viceroy proved unfortunate.

In a conversation with Thomas Brodrick, his Grace asked when he must go over. Would not the people be as well satisfied with Lords Justices, of whom his brother Midleton was one? But "the bait did not cover the hook," and Brodrick replied that "people were always best pleased when a Chief Governor spent as much time among them as his Majesty's affairs would admit of," and everything would go easy if he did what was right. His Grace rejoined by calling him a Whiteboy;[1] a term which, however used in banter, shows what was thought at the Cockpit of those who were not sufficiently tractable in their Irish politics. The use of an epithet then comparatively unknown in a quarter so remote from that of its origin can only be accounted for by recollecting that Grafton had lived on terms of intimacy with the Brodricks, not only in England, but in Ireland, when serving as one of the Lords Justices there. It had still but a local significance in the districts where the peasantry,

[1] Thomas Brodrick to the Irish Chancellor, 23rd June, 1720.—*MS.*

stung to frenzy by the arbitrary exaction of tolls or exorbitant rents, or the infliction of penalties still harder to bear, combined for lawless vengeance, and roved at midnight wearing white bands, or their shirts over their frieze coats. The extensive property in Cork from which the Chancellor took his title, and which was managed by him for his elder brother, had never been disturbed by these alarms ; and the tillers of the soil dwelt thereon in peace and safety. Like every wise and humane landlord, Midleton deplored the violence and cruelty wrought in hours of darkness elsewhere ; but deprecated not the less firmly resort to indiscriminate measures of prædial or sectarian repression unaccompanied by practical measures of social and industrial justice to the appendant realm.

Grafton could not be mistaken in what was expected of him by his colleagues while holding the Irish portfolio. How often he should visit Ireland and how long he should tarry there was left to his own discretion, and he exercised it by staying for the most part at home, and attending the meetings at the Cockpit, where decisions were always to be taken on Irish questions—not at the Castle of Dublin. Poyning's Law made this imperative regarding local legislation ; and the Cabinet had come to the resolution that in every important matter of patronage, taxation, or garrison, their Lieutenant-General and nominal governor of Ireland should make known to them unreservedly every circumstance of each case, and should loyally carry into effect their instructions. His inexperienced Grace probably believed that these functions might be more agreeably performed in frequent visits to town from Euston ; and that his official labours would be lessened if he were represented on the spot by three such deputies as Midleton, King, and Conolly ; each of whom knew more about men and things requiring to be dealt with than he could affect to possess, each of whom had a way of his own of looking at affairs ; but whose unanimity when they agreed and said so in writing might well give weight to his report and suggestion in Council. Be this as it may, we know that he did not cross the Channel till August, 1721, and after a sojourn of five months, that he resumed his absentee Viceroyalty, going over for the second and last time in four years on occasions of extreme urgency. But absenteeism was a characteristic feature of provincial rule. Prelates, judges, and commanding officers were only expected to dwell in the

tributary realm until they had made their fortunes; and many of them returned to enjoy them in their native land. Most of the pensions charged on the Irish Establishment were to persons who had never set foot in the country; and a great many Members of the Upper House never made their appearance there, being only Irish Peers in the sense that they were not British nobles. Wake grieved over the reports continually furnished him by his Episcopal correspondents in Ireland. Canonical residence was comparatively rare. Thoughtful men among the laity lamented, and thoughtless men among them laughed at the unreality of a system that was neither indigenous nor missionary; but there was no one in the Cabinet acquainted with the actual condition of things; and if clerical appointments were sinecures, might they not as well be given to graduates of Oxford or Cambridge as to graduates of Dublin University? But the system was hardly reduced to one of smooth-working organisation until, on the death of Primate Lindsay, Boulter was transferred from Bristol to Armagh, and instructed to carry into effect the desires and intentions of his patrons with reference to the disposal of Church preferment. Sunderland had made some amends for his own pro-consular neglect. But Grafton said that "he had carried the practice too far by choosing out of the natives most of the judges, and the bishops too, which had been attended with very mischievous consequences to the English interest."

His Excellency set himself accordingly to enforce the opposite rule. The Deanery of Down, one of the richest in the Kingdom, fell vacant, and the Princess of Wales asked and obtained it for Berkeley, whose writings had been commended to her notice by Hoadly and Clark, and with whose elevation of thought and earnestness in pleading for the helpless, she had been greatly impressed. But Grafton, asserting that the gift of all ecclesiastical dignities was in him, refused his assent, and appointed instead one of his own chaplains; and the author of *Alciphron* had to be content with the less valuable Deanery of Derry.

In compliance with the prayer of petitions from certain manufacturers of the finer descriptions of linen, in 1719, a committee of the Commons at Westminster recommended that the wearing of "stained or printed fabrics" brought from Ireland should be prohibited. With a view to prevent this point being carried, Midleton wrote to his brother confidentially by Mr. Ward, a

Member of the Irish Commons, remonstrating against the pretence that a bargain had been made between the two Legislatures when the woollen trade was sacrificed, in order that Ireland should betake herself exclusively to the making of coarse or plain linen cloths. New branches of "the linen manufactures had begun to spread southward, and turned to good advantage to some parts of Munster, and would do more so from time to time. He did hope and suppose they had no view toward the taking away from that part of the Kingdom, which had suffered so much already in their woollen manufactures, the little remains of that trade which they still enjoyed, and upon which great numbers maintained their families."[1]

A remonstrance so reasonable was naturally brought to the notice of the new Viceroy, who did not want to quarrel with him or his relatives at Westminster, but, on the impulse of the moment, he probably wished to give warning of his purpose not to side in Council with the minority who adhered to notions of legislative amelioration.

Another turn somewhat later was given to the screw of industrial exclusion. A Bill to encourage the making of sail-cloth in England was in progress through Committee at Westminster. Alarm was taken in Ireland lest its provisions should interfere with that part of the only export manufacture then permitted from Ireland, and the Linen Board desired Southwell, who was a member of their body, to interpose, as best he could, at Whitehall for the prevention of that result.[2] King wrote to the same effect to the Primate, invoking his aid, and suggesting that it would be well if all heads of Bills sent over from Ireland should pass through the hands of the Irish Under-Secretary in London, whose duty it would be thoroughly to acquaint the Secretary of State with their purpose and probable effect, instead of their being transmitted, like despatches from abroad, by the hands of a member of the Viceregal Staff, who earned a handsome fee for taking over a batch of such legislative projects, and who could not be looked upon as competent to explain or define their meaning.[3] The Sail-cloth Bill was passed, nevertheless, and its provisions further excluded Irish competition.

[1] To his brother, 11th Dec., 1719.—*MS.*

[2] Coghill Correspondence, 22nd December, 1722.—*MS.*

[3] January, 1723.—*MS.*

Grafton was possibly not aware how readily his nomination as Viceroy had been abetted by more than one of the King's foreign favourites from their persuasion that he would prove a reliable accessory in their schemes of personal ambition.

Irish Peerages had been conferred on both the King's principal Ladies-in-Waiting without either going through the preliminary forms of naturalisation. There was no Irish Peer or Commoner to enter a caveat in Cabinet to proceedings plainly in breach of the Statute against ennobling aliens. But when in *paulo post* future English Peerages were to be granted and gazetted, it struck the constitutional mind of Chancellor Parker that legal decencies had better be observed. Instructions were therefore sent, by order of the Secretary of State, to the Irish Government, that the proper steps should be taken without delay for making Madame Kilmansegge a denizen of Ireland preparatory to her being created Countess of Leinster,[1] and, in the fulness of time, Countess of Darlington. Corresponding care was taken to qualify her Grace of Munster to be raised to the English dignity of Duchess of Kendal, while her Royal daughter Melosina Schuylenberg was created Countess of Walsingham. Orders were sent to the Exchequer to pay £648 fees on her patent, and the like sum on the patent of Madame de Platen.[2] Had no gleam of suspicion crossed his Excellency's mind of the uses to which he was meant to be put in ratifying strange honours and bargains! Or was it only when commanded by the Treasury to recognise Birmingham tokens as current coin and give them a forced circulation that he began, as he said, to "feel thoroughly miserable"?

A wealthy speculator, named Wood, by the gift of £5,000 to the King's mistress, had obtained permission to fabricate £120,000 worth of half-pence and farthings, which the Executive undertook should have circulation in Ireland as a legal tender, by using it in payment of Government salaries and pensions. The privilege granted was for fourteen years, a rent of £800 a year being reserved to the Crown, and £200 a year for a Clerk-Comptroller. Lbs. 100,000 was to be issued the first year, and

[1] P. Whichcote to Under-Secretaries Temple Stanyan and Thomas Tickel, 10th October, 1721.—Irish State Papers—*MS.*

[2] Under-Secretary Tilson to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 10th April, 1722.—Calendar of Treasury Papers.

lbs. 20,000 in each year succeeding. Every pound weight of copper was to be made into tokens representing half-a-crown in silver; but in the first instance it was said in the Government prints to be intended only for those who chose to take it as coin. Any attempt at counterfeit was to be made liable to the penalties attaching to the forgery of base coin. These in Plantagenet days had been especially barbarous; and even in later times were such as to mark with merciless vengeance all who were guilty of a crime still accounted "treason." Not long before several persons were capitally convicted at the Old Bailey; and a female accomplice was first strangled and then burned at Tyburn in presence of a vast multitude.[1]

Chancellor Midleton when first made acquainted with the scheme did not hesitate to deprecate on legal and political grounds such an act on the part of the Crown without the cognisance of the Irish Privy Council and Legislature.[2]

Precedents, it was averred, had been set in previous reigns for devolving on unofficial persons the function of supplying the want of copper coin. Letters patent under the great Seal of Ireland had in 1680 been granted to Colonel Legge and Sir T. Armstrong by the advice of Ormond as Chief Governor, to make such quantity of half-pence of copper as might be issued during one and twenty years; . . . such half-pence to weigh one hundred and ten grains troy weight . . . In any case should persons happen to be surcharged in the course of their trades, with more of the said half-pence than they could utter, the patentees were required to deliver at any time the sum of twenty shillings sterling in silver for every sum of twenty-one shillings returned in the same so-called coin.[3]

To secure its currency, the Viceroy in Council issued a proclamation forbidding any other persons to fabricate in Ireland or to import from abroad copper tokens, and straightly commanding and requiring that the aforesaid copper half-pence, made by Royal Authority, and no other tokens, should be used, and taken in all dealings whereby exchange of small money was necessary between man and man as current monies, yet

[1] Barrow's State Trials.

[2] Brodrick Correspondence, 1721.

[3] Witness our said Lt.-Gen. and Gen.-Governor of Ireland at Dublin, 18th May, 1680: Domville, Auditor's Office, lib. xxvii., 154: cited by Simon on Irish coins.

none were compelled to receive of the said copper half-pence in any payment above five shillings in one hundred pounds.

On the demise of the Crown the patent was renewed under the same conditions as to legal tender and convertibility, and the tokens being in quality and bulk equal to those current in Great Britain, no popular misgiving arose as to their use, which continued until they were called in, in 1689, to make room for the avowedly debased coin issued by James II. in that year.[1] Reference to such precedents served only to condemn their clumsy caricature.

Additions to the public currency could not be manufactured by the graving of a national emblem on one side and the Royal image on the other; still less by the assurances of irresponsible officials that their metallic value and weight would be adequate and uniform. The utility of a sound exchangeable medium for the poor as well as for the rich no one questioned, but it must be unquestionable. Coins, whether gold, silver, or brass, were what Bacon said of enactments—"laws they were not which public opinion had not made." The only test of validity or value was that of convertibility; and without this primary condition no substitutes, even if accepted at first, would long retain their nominal value. How futile and mischievous then, would it be for Government to try and force them into circulation by their use in the payment of salaries, pensions, and wages, or for goods supplied. The first issues might bear specific analysis and stand the test of weight in the grocer's scales, but who could tell how many subsequent cargoes of jingling hardware would be equal in metal or money's worth? And who would undertake to quench the doubt once raised in the popular mind? Objections like these look obvious enough to the economist's eye; but Grafton was no economist, and he could only report them with or without slighting comment to the Secretary of State, by whom they were probably thought hardly deserving of serious reply.

It was not until a Privy Seal was gazetted in July, 1722, confirming the privilege to Wood of manufacturing tokens for use in Ireland only, that the public became aware that in their daily business transactions they were to be left to the discretion of an unknown and unofficial stranger. To the surprise of the Execu-

[1] *MS.* by Judge Caulfield, Irish State Papers.

tive, subordinate officials and persons of consequence hitherto regarded as fast friends were the first to express alarm. The Commissioners of Customs, of whom Speaker Conolly was Chairman, signed and presented a memorial against the threatened addition, so called, to the circulating medium, on fiscal and commercial grounds, for they naturally feared that the agitation it was likely to cause would disturb trade and diminish the revenue.[1] What they demurely uttered was soon repeated with less caution, and reiterated in language more provoking.

The agitation in Dublin occasioned no little uneasiness. Coghill, Judge of the Court of Probate, whose duties brought him into frequent contact with officials at the Castle, feared that the revenue would suffer, and thought it was hard upon the poorer pensioners, who could not refuse the new tokens, but would find it impossible to make use of them except at a heavy discount.[2] A vessel arriving in Cork harbour with a mixed freight was suspected of having on board half-a-dozen barrels of what was called the mock money, and, the alarm being given, boats speedily put off from shore with volunteer coastguards, who took upon them to overhaul the cargo, and unloaded the ship of her unpatriotic contents, which they bore off in triumph. Class after class caught the contagion of distrust, and by the time Parliament met, an unaccustomed unison of discontent prevailed.

The Lords spiritual and temporal, in an Address to the King, gave utterance to the national sense of grievance in unaccustomed tones: "We are under the utmost concern to find that our duty indispensably calls upon us to acquaint your Majesty with the ill consequences which will follow from a patent for coining half-pence to be uttered in this Kingdom, obtained under the Great Seal of Great Britain by one William Wood, in a clandestine and unprecedented manner. We are most humbly of opinion that the diminution of your Majesty's revenue, the ruin of our trades, and the impoverishing of your people, must unavoidably attend this undertaking, and from the most exact inquiries and computations we have been able to make, it appears to us that the gain to William Wood will be excessive, and the loss to this Kingdom, by circulating this base coin,

[1] 7th August, 1722, Irish State Papers.—*MS.*

[2] January, 1723.—*MS.*

greater than this poor country is able to bear. With the greatest submission and deference to your Majesty's wisdom, we beg we may offer it as our humble opinion that the reserving the coining of half-pence and farthings to the Crown, and the not trusting it with any private person, body politic or corporate, will always be for your Majesty's service and the good of your people in this Kingdom. We beseech your Majesty that you will be pleased to extend that goodness and compassion to us which has so eminently showed itself to all your other subjects who have the happiness to live under your protection and government, and that you will give such directions as may effectually free us from the terrible apprehensions we labour under from the patent granted to William Wood."[1]

The Commons adopted by a great majority an Address in equally energetic terms.[2] Both Addresses were presented to the Lord-Lieutenant for transmission to the Sovereign, and Grafton contented himself with a laconic assurance that he should not fail to do so. A vote of thanks was thereupon passed for his Excellency's prompt compliance with their request; and, not to be outdone in courtesy, he directed Chief Secretary Hopkins to assure Parliament that he would always feel the greatest satisfaction in conveying their wishes to his Majesty. It was this supererogatory avowal of his readiness to question the proceedings at Whitehall that drew from the First Lord of the Treasury an explosion of wrath exceeding all the ordinary bounds of official or personal consideration.

Ministers, though impatient at the presumption of the local Parliament and the Executive in questioning what they had sanctioned, thought it better to walk softly. Sunderland, Carteret, and Roxburgh had been fully imformed by Thomas Brodrick of the nature of the grounds of objection to the proposal, and the unanimity with which they were supported, and Walpole and Townshend were not prepared to risk another break up in the Administration to soothe the growing ill-temper of the Palace. The Cabinet consequently agreed to frame an answer to the Addresses of the Irish Parliament, in which George I. owned "his concern that his granting a patent for coining half-pence agreeably to the practice of his Royal prede-

[1] Irish Lords' Journals, 28th Dec., 1723.
[2] Commons' Journals, Sept., 1723.

cessors had given so much uneasiness, and declared if any abuses had been committed by the patentee his Majesty would give the necessary orders for the inquiring into and punishing the same, and would do everything in his power for the satisfaction of his people." A Commission, consisting of Sir Isaac Newton, Master of the Mint; the Right Hon. E. Southwell, Under Secretary for Ireland in London; and John Scrope, M.P. for Ripon, Chief Clerk in the Treasury, were appointed to inquire and report into all the circumstances of the case; and as their investigations or their findings need not be precipitated, time would be gained for the tide of popular ill-humour to go down. There was nothing, however, in the Royal assurances to appease the general misgivings or to slacken the persistent efforts that were making to force the circulation of the tokens.

After three weeks spent in anxious controversy with persons of various degrees, Grafton was sorry to be compelled to own that he could not find one who would engage to oppose absolutely a Parliamentary consideration of the grant. They all agreed that it would be detrimental both to the nation and the Revenue. It appeared to him that it was not in his power to prevent the Parliament from proceeding upon the affair. The Chancellor was daily repeating his assurances of doing everything in the best and smoothest way, while his son was at the same time making the most inflammatory speeches in the House.

Ministers would see what an unhappy situation he was in. He laboured from morning to night under the greatest difficulties and uneasiness, and feared that at last the event would be very far from being agreeable either to them or to himself.[1]

Wood undertook to satisfy the Commission that an urgent want had prevailed in Ireland of copper currency; that employers frequently paid wages in promissory penny notes in wood, leather, or brass; that the remnants of the base money issued by King James were still a scandal and a hindrance to trade. To remedy these evils he had engaged to furnish a better circulating medium. The specimen offered for assay at the Mint had been found up to standard weight and worth, and some of them even to exceed it, and who could show that the whole of the 360 tons of copper would not be molten into coins equal to sample? He had given his word; the King had taken it: what need was there

[1] From Grafton to Walpole, 14th Sept., 1723. Irish State Papers.—*MS.*

of further witness? To silence cavil, nevertheless, the Commission were prepared to hear what could be said in support of the complaints of the Irish Executive and Legislature, and Secretary Townshend directed the Lords Justices to submit for their inspection the documents and correspondence relating to the subject, and to send over such persons as might be able to explain their views and apprehensions. On receipt of this communication it was laid before the Privy Council, who sustained the Lords Justices in declining to submit to be interrogated by deputy on a subject strictly within their administrative discretion, or to render an account, oral or written, to a tribunal having no jurisdiction or authority within the realm; and the Chancellor was requested to frame their reply. They further resolved that if orders or directions with the effect of orders had been given by any authority without their cognisance to force the circulation in acceptance or payment by any persons employed by Government, such a proceeding was unconstitutional and not to be endured. The Lords Justices, transmitting these resolutions to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, expressed their conviction that nothing would restore tranquillity and content but the withdrawal of the patent.

The indignation of the Cabinet was great, as a draft rejoinder by Newcastle (acting in Townshend's absence as Assistant Secretary of State), with many corrections and interpolations, testifies. Grafton shrank from vindicating his deputies at the Castle; and failed to convince the brother of Midleton that he was in the wrong. Wake was loth to believe his friend the Archbishop of Dublin capable of implied sedition, which Parker on the other hand did not scruple to impute; and the rest of their colleagues, at fault between conflicting statements of facts and usage, could only suppose that Walpole was in earnest when he said "he would force the new coinage down the throat of the ignorant people who did not know how good it was." The Report of the Commission, however, concluded by recommending that the issue should be limited to £40,000, or one-third of the sum authorised by the patent, and the King in Council made an order to that effect.[1] With this compromise it was hoped that Carteret would be able to still the storm at the outset of his Viceroyalty. But this, like all concessions yielded to pro-

[1] 18th August, 1724.

longed agitation, was received without gratitude and hailed as a certain prelude to complete success.

The name of Sir Isaac Newton was freely used in official correspondence and journalism to support the mandate of the Treasury; for by him the assay at the Mint, it was pretended, had been made. It so happened in point of fact that, being at the time unwell, he had nothing to do with the operation, which was performed by one of his subordinates, faithfully no doubt, but to little purpose, as was subsequently proved by the careful scrutiny of one who had no motive to mislead, and whose means of investigation were much more comprehensive. In 1746, from the parcels sent over by Wood remaining in possession of the Irish Government, an equal number of tokens were at random taken for the purpose of analytical comparison, and their component parts and actual weight were found to differ so widely that an average of the whole measured thereby would have threatened a loss of £69,064. "And even had Mr. Wood made his half-pence of the weight limited by the patent, yet the loss to Ireland would have amounted to £60,480; every halfpenny in the pound weight exceeding the number directed by the patent giving the patentee £1,680 profit. The English half-pence being but forty-four half pieces to the pound, three hundred and sixty tons (of copper) would make seventy-four thousand seven hundred and sixty pounds only, that is, twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds less than by the patent for Ireland" were promised by its grantee.[1]

The work containing this disclosure was inscribed to the Lords Justices, Primate Stone, Lord Chancellor Newport, and Speaker Boyle; and did not see the light till Walpole, Townshend, her Grace of Kendal, and the patentee himself, were beyond the reach of its reproach. Half a century later Mr. Ruding, in his comprehensive annals of the coinage, while giving the result of this *post-mortem* examination of the almost successful cheat, tried to minimise the possible loss to the community, and the equivalent profit Wood hoped to gain. Blindfolded by official evasions of facts, and disregard of the constitutional remonstrance by which Ministers ought to have been swayed, their apologist would have it believed that the national resistance was a bubble inflated by the frenzied spite of Swift; and that if the Drapier's

[1] Essay on Irish Coins by Simon—71.

Letters never had appeared the crowd would never have found out the difference, and the skilful brazier and his fitting patroness might have enjoyed the fruits of his invention in peace.

But the Venerable biographer of Walpole, more subtle and more eloquent, would fain allow the hero of his Ministerialade to escape the sharp edge of blame in a cloud of ridicule and censure of Swift; and subsequent writers have too readily been drawn into the snare of being told they must choose between the cautious and sagacious statesman whose life was one long success, and the wayward child of genius whom disappointment embittered, and whom, despite great popularity, a matchless power of invective betrayed continually into extravagance all but insane. Carteret and the minority of the Cabinet were suspected of countenancing Midleton in the course he had taken about Wood, while Walpole and Townshend supported the Viceroy, who had sanctioned the issue.

After an absence of eighteen months, on resuming office in August, 1723, Grafton spoke in confidence to the principal persons around him, urging them to lend their aid in settling the question of the copper coinage, but he found that even those most friendly to the Government dare not undertake the defence of the patent. They allowed that some of the objections made to it were frivolous, but there were some things in it so much more prejudicial to the Kingdom than in any former grants that if they should support it they would lose the credit that enabled them to be of use.[1]

The Irish Chancellor and his relatives continued to exercise considerable influence on both sides of the Channel. His elder brother, Thomas Brodrick, who sat for Stockbridge, was chairman of the Committee of Inquiry into the South Sea scheme; he himself was Member for Midhurst, and his eldest son, who represented Cork and led the Opposition in the Irish Commons, succeeded Edward Carteret in the English Parliament for Berealston. Their connections were, besides, numerous and influential; and they had proved intractable so often that Townshend, when at Hanover, prepared the King for Lord Midleton's removal when a fitting opportunity should arise. Without tangible excuse, however, it was thought better to

[1] Grafton to Delafaye. 22nd August, 1723. Irish State Papers.—*MS.*

defer a proceeding so plainly hostile to the section of the Cabinet that reckoned the Brodricks amongst their friends, and the Great Seal of Ireland was suffered to remain some time longer in Lord Midleton's hands.

While Townshend was with the King at Hanover, Walpole discharged the functions of his department in domestic affairs. His regard for Grafton prompted him to express his dissent and that of others with the recent conduct of the Irish Administration in not dealing with sufficient firmness, as he conceived, with the seditious language out of doors, and the factions of Opposition in Parliament which the Chancellor was supposed to favour, if not encourage. Walpole wrote: "I desire to be excused from writing to you as Secretary of State on the subject-matter of your public and private letters, but hope you will excuse me if once more, as a private friend, I take the liberty of giving you my thoughts on what you are doing in Ireland. I do not wonder at all that nobody appears in the defence of the King's patent when you think it advisable to write and express yourself in the manner you do in your public letter. If you think it proper to disclaim it, the principal of his Majesty's servants cannot be diverted from taking notice of it in a Parliamentary way. I shall wonder at nothing that shall happen on this occasion. The printed paper you send me is the most arrant Grub-street paper I ever read in my life, which, I think, is not my business to answer." He then goes into strong argument to prove that the analysis at the Mint must be taken as conclusive for the intrinsic value of all that might be issued. "The Irish Parliament is attacking a patent already passed, for whom, and in favour of whom alone, you know very well. Will it be for the (public) service to suffer an indignity in that view? The patent was passed by those that you have been hitherto looked upon as pretty nearly engaged with in the public capacity. Are they no longer worth that care or trouble? It was passed under the particular care and direction of one upon whom the first reflection must fall, that never yet was indifferent when you were concerned. That consideration, you will be told, is not worth the hazarding the quiet of the Session for."

There may have been no other method of dealing with the fact thus boldly avowed than by thus taunting the weak Viceroy either to assent or pretend not to know it; but it is plain, from

the heat and recklessness of Walpole's language, that the interests of their party and their ascendancy at Court were thought to be in danger. If Grafton could not be wheedled or stung into absolute compliance with the avarice of the Duchess of Kendal, and the blindness at will of the First Lord of the Treasury, someone more pliant must be found to rule at the Castle than Midleton, whose connections in England were only strong enough to damage them, but not to save him the loss of the Irish Chancellorship. "And does your Grace think you will be thought to make a glorious campaign if, by compounding for this, you should be able to carry all your other business through without much difficulty? The objections that have come over are too late to be of any use, arriving here but the day the Irish Parliament was to take the matter into consideration. I venture to pronounce them frivolous, and such as a very common understanding with a willing mind may easily refute. I have never known more care taken in passing a patent. I am still satisfied it is very well to be supported. What remedy the wisdom of Ireland will find out for this supposed grievance I am at a loss to guess, and upon whom the consequence of this Irish storm will fall most heavy I will not say. I shall have my share; but, if I am not mistaken, there are others that will not escape. I hope your Grace is not mistaken when you are persuaded to be thus indifferent. There are some people that think they are ever to fatten at the expense of other men's labours and characters, and be themselves the most righteous fine gentlemen. It is a species of mankind that I own I detest; but I'll say no more, and if your Grace thinks I have said too much, I am sorry for it, but mark the end."[1]

His Grace, thus browbeaten, succumbed, and was readmitted to Cabinet favour. The King's answers to the Addresses of both Houses, transmitted by Carteret, were couched in sufficiently gracious terms, but not having reached Dublin till after the adjournment, they were not published until after the recess.

The Irish Commons asked by Addresses for an exemplification of Wood's patent, and the Viceroy answered that he had no such document in his possession. The Chancellor wrote confidentially to Walpole expressing his grave regret at such a reply, and once more gave warning of the growing alienation the

[1] Walpole to Grafton, 24th Sept., 1723. Ir. State Pap.—*MS.*

controversy had engendered. Subsequently a copy was laid before the House. The Commons agreed to resolutions condemnatory of the power improvidently granted to Wood, as injurious to the general interests of the Kingdom.

Mr. Brodrick moved a direct vote of censure on those in England who had advised the obnoxious grant, but he was overruled.[1] Walpole scornfully refused to give way. "I have weathered many storms," he said; "I hope I shall not be lost at last in an Irish hurricane, and that when I am, those who are insensible of such unjust scandal heard upon me will not know the want of me; and I give your Grace my word that when this comes to be retorted upon you, as much as I am hurt, I will not be indifferent. You seem to think we must give into it, too. I desire to know what relief it is that you expect, and what is possible to be done to the satisfaction of a Parliament that has been suffered to give themselves such a loose rein I confess myself unable to find out. I write to you in my private capacity, for as Secretary of State I will not say one word upon it."[2]

Grafton felt that he was losing hold of the confidence of the Cabinet; he owned with bitterness his surprise that the impressions made to his disadvantage had been so readily received. "But it is my misfortune to be put on a justification of myself for not having paid a due regard for your friendship, which in many respects I have ever esteemed most valuable. I am sorry my public letter should have been considered as a disdaining of the King's patent. Could I be silent on a subject which every private letter from hence must probably be full of? Or could I think it either respectful or polite that the first knowledge of this dissatisfaction should reach a certain quarter in company with some disagreeable votes, for such I apprehend would be the result after having tried everything, at first to divert an inquiry and afterwards to make it of no effect? The Resolutions as sent over are, I assure you, no more pleasing to me than they are to you. I appeal to every English gentleman in this Kingdom whether it was practicable to stop this torrent even though my credit and capacity had been much greater than they are, and which are liable, I find, to be thought too inconsiderable for

[1] Midleton to Walpole, 15th Sept., 1723. Irish St. Pap.—*MS.*

[2] Walpole to Grafton, 3rd Oct., 1723. Irish St. Pap.—*MS.*

such a management. It is my great misfortune that I have not a larger share of both, but I should reckon it a much greater if you could entertain a supposition that I did not try the extent of both on this important occasion. As for the printed paper which I sent you, as you consider it as not your business to answer it, so, I am sure, it is not mine to support it.. The Resolutions, which passed almost unanimously, seemed grounded upon some of the same notions. I cannot be answerable for Grub Street authors or Grub Street understandings; but it is extremely mortifying to me that it should be thought I wanted a willing mind to refute the objections which were made to the grant after labouring day and night to remove unreasonable prejudices, and prevent the consequences thereof. The objection is levelled, not at the patent, put at the patentee, charged with fraud on the execution of the grant, that upon an assay made, it appeared there were four sorts differing in weight. Different persons who deal in these metals, deposed upon oath that in this Kingdom copper of that fineness was worth at most but twelve pence a pound, and, therefore, by this importation there was a loss of three-fifths to the nation, but nobody argued from this that the entire three-fifths went to the patentee. I hope I shall not be understood to disclaim the King's patent because I have touched upon the charges against the patentee. I must be the weakest man alive could I persuade myself that in this attack the arrows would fly over my head. Could I have been so blind my eyes would have been opened on the first motions in the affair. I am, perhaps, more convinced than you are that this attempt had its spring on another side the water. That part of your letter which wounds me sensibly is that in which you charge me with indifference in what concerns yourself, implying the greatest want of friendship and gratitude in me. Am I already thought so abandoned as to have suffered an indignity to be offered to the King's patent to make my administration easy the rest of the Session? Such a shameful (imputation) I both abhor and disown. Far from thinking a campaign glorious to me upon those terms, I should have confessed it an ignominious one, as it proves an unfortunate one, and such I foresaw it would be before I had been a week in the Kingdom. Can anything more severely affect me than a belief that, upon any consideration whatever, I would barter away my

duty to the King, or betray my benefactors? I must not conceal from you that the article of pensions has a great share in keeping afoot these murmurings. The clear increase upon this head in the Civil List since the last report from the Committee of Accounts, amounted to £13,199 per annum. The Address to the King herewith enclosed arose from the additional charge to the Establishment. The country party spoke out and warmly upon this point; and, indeed, others of this country are so uneasy at what they call a heavy burden, and at the long term of years for which most of the late ones are granted, that they made but a faint opposition to the Resolution. In the English storms you have weathered I never endeavoured or desired to get first to shore; nor could I imagine that in an Irish hurricane I could have any view of safety where you are in danger."[1]

From Houghton, the First Lord wrote: "The personal regard I have always and truly had for the Duke of Grafton makes his manner of treating me very shocking and insupportable; but I am come to a resolution to say nothing at all, which, I am sure, is as much as can be expected from me. But I am still more at a loss to know how to reply to the Address (from the Irish Parliament), which is no less than a *civil* remonstrance, if it deserves that epithet, against the pensions that have been granted, and desiring the King to grant no more. The King must not admit that what he has done is wrong, nor must he engage not to grant any more, which makes it impossible to give any more than a general answer, which I have with some difficulty drawn."[2]

This perfunctory acknowledgment served only to deepen the Viceroy's perplexity and mortification. He had done his best, he thought, and found it only treated as though it were the worst; and he looked forward with despondency to fresh outbreaks of dissatisfaction.

Grafton's despondency in his position, he himself declared, arose from finding that not one man of credit in the whole of Ireland was ready to defend Wood's patent, while the clamour of their party opponents knew no bounds; and he was hurt by certain expressions in the private letters of the First Minister touching his position in the matter. Newcastle truly observes

[1] Grafton to Walpole, 19th Oct., Recd. 27th, 1723. Irish St. Pap.—*MS.*

[2] Walpole to Townshend, 30th Oct., 1723.—*MS.*

that the objections made by the Irish were but the natural consequences of the dependency of that Kingdom, which he feared too much both friends and foes in Ireland were for shaking off, and something must be done; but God knew when or where to prevent this growing evil. Townshend would see to what a height the Irish Commons had come by their last Address. It was plain what they aimed at. The Duke of Grafton had told him confidentially that this Address was the best that could be obtained from the Parliament, and Lord Midleton intimated his hope that a favourable answer might be given to it. By Carteret, from Hanover, this course would seem to have been advised, and Newcastle hinted that it might have been suggested or even "concerted with" them. He owned that in some of the intercepted correspondence with foreign Ministers "the advantage that a certain great lady was supposed to have from the patent" was dwelt on.[1] Nevertheless, Grafton made up thenceforth for lost time by giving his colleagues in England samples of the discontent which, far from declining, he thought was on the increase. County Members, who did not usually give up hunting before Christmas, had been brought to town to keep watch and ward in Parliament against further pensions and the influx of base coin, and his Excellency was sorry to say that their minds were kept so inflamed by the insidious arts of faction that too many of them lent themselves to various irrelevant and provoking debates to delay the Money Bill till Royal answers to the Addresses should be received, which, when they did arrive, would "appear cold and doubtful so as not to give satisfaction, for they had maliciously put about reports as if their treatment of the patents was severely answered at a meeting of the Regency, and they were alarmed at a speech they pretended was there made by the Lord Chancellor; and Mr. Brodrick, it was evident, had a mind to keep them in hot water until the recess."[2] To keep the cause alive, Brodrick had given a threatening notice for a call of the House on the first day they should meet again.

Synge assured the friend in the Cabinet whom he trusted and

[1] He took care to wind up his long epistle to the Secretary of State with his usual amount of compliments to their "good Duchess."

[2] Grafton to Walpole, 2nd November, 1723. Ir. St. Pap.—*MS.*

valued most throughout life, that the imputations cast on the political fidelity of those in Ireland who, like himself, resisted the engrossing policy of judicial appeals to London, and the filling Irish offices with English favourites, and the selling for a scandalous bribe to a German courtesan of the right to issue copper money, were wholly without foundation. They were staunch as ever in loyalty to the Crown, the Constitution, and connection with England. In truth, he had never heard any thought of disaffection to these principles expressed either in or out of Parliament, and he did not believe that any of them were undermined or endangered; but "it was impossible for them to alter their opinions where no reason appeared. Neither regarding appeals nor any other thing did they ever receive any other answer but a British Act of Parliament, which to him seemed as the cutting of a knot which could not be untied."[1]

Despairing of being able to break the force of concurrent discontents on secular grounds, Grafton bethought him of the old device for causing division by invoking sectarian suspicion and animosity. After congratulations on the defeat of the late Jacobite conspiracy in England, he dwelt on the necessity of adding a new chapter to the Penal Code to prevent more effectually the evasion of existing statutes by Catholic priests, whose number was known to be on the increase. The passing of such a measure would, he hoped, divert attention within doors, and without tend to cool, if not estrange, popular support.[2]

Heads of a *Bill to Strengthen the Protestant Interest* were consequently prepared and brought in; and, provoking less discussion than was anticipated, were expanded by the addition at the Castle of clauses far more rigorous than any the Commons had been asked to suggest.

Archbishop Synge disapproved greatly of the measure. What was done in England in the days of Elizabeth, when there were plots and conspiracies against the Queen's life, could not be quoted as precedent for doing the like in other days. If any priest would not renounce the Pretender and disclaim the Pope's power of deposing Princes, let him leave the Kingdom or be dealt with under the existing law; but if

[1] To Wake, November 4th, 1723.—*MS.*

[2] To Townshend, November, 1723.—*MS.*

he was ready to do all this, and to give bail for his loyal behaviour, the Archbishop must own that he could not come into a law to put him to death, under the name of high treason, but in reality only for adhering to an erroneous religion, and worshipping God according to it. He heartily wished that effectual laws might be made for the security of the Protestant succession; but if the civil state might be made safe without persecuting any man for his religion (as he could not but think it might), surely it was the way that was most agreeable to the spirit of Christianity.[1]

The Viceroy transmitted the draft measure, to which he averred that general assent had been given, for further enforcing the laws against foreign ecclesiastics, who were charged with clandestinely enlisting men for service abroad. "Some clauses, at first sight, might seem severe; yet the vast swarms of priests who infested the Kingdom, and who were continually negotiating against the Government, had prevailed on many who had the tenderest regard for liberty of conscience to think this Bill a necessary support of the Protestant interest."[2]

Neither section of the Cabinet seemed to have been willing further to inflame the sectarian feud in sanctioning these new proposals. A small committee of the Cabinet, over which Newcastle presided, was directed to consider and report whether the measure could be amended, or passed in the form transmitted from Dublin. They agreed on laying it aside altogether, and Townshend informed Horace Walpole at Paris, with leave to apprise M. Fleury of the fact, but he specially enjoined him to avoid recognising in any way that any intervention had taken place on his part.[3] The truth seems to be that, through Carteret, the French Minister had remonstrated against the proceeding as incompatible with the professions of international amity and reciprocal forbearance for some time interchanged; but it was felt to be dangerous that any English Minister should be liable to a question in Parliament on the subject, and Townshend did not choose to admit that Carteret was entitled to any share of the credit in having brought about the rejection of the sanguinary scheme.

[1] Synge to Wake, 13th December, 1723.—*MS.*
[2] To Carteret, 13th November, 1723. Ir. St. Pap.—*MS.*
[3] 6th January, 1724.—*MS.*

In the rising controversy, Midleton abstained from the language and demeanour which opponents of the ill-starred measure who were free from official ties daily more openly indulged in. But his opinion of its impolicy was not concealed. He felt keenly the loss of confidence not obscurely shown by those in power, and prepared himself once more to pay the penalty of deprivation for the popularity he enjoyed. "Whatever the event may be, I have the comfort to know I fall a sacrifice to the opposition I gave to Wood's Half-pence, and I had rather fall for these with my country."[1] The system of Post Office espionage which was exercised under the warrant of the Secretary of State is vividly described in one of Thomas Brodrick's letters to the Irish Chancellor. "Upon New Year's day (1724) came yours of 8th of last month, postmarked on that day so that you may be very certain 'twas stopped on your side, and probably a copy sent over, before it was let go forward, for of the many you say you wrote, not one came to hand; the same, I perceive, has happened to those from hence."[2] St. John Brodrick had frequent interviews with Carteret, who sympathised with the Chancellor's vexation, and made warm professions of friendship and support. But as all their letters were opened, he advised his father, who never signed his confidential letters, to write to friends in England instead of to him.[3] In an interview with Walpole the Minister repeatedly disclaimed having had any hand in the patent except that it came officially before him as First Lord of the Treasury. He owned that Sir I. Newton had been disabled by illness from making the assay directed by Government, which had been done by Mr. Barton, his nephew, who pronounced the specimens subjected to the test of full value, while Mr. Wood gave his personal assurance that he had made none of any inferior quality. Walpole, therefore, found much fault with the resolution of the Irish Parliament, denouncing the coinage as base money.

After all, it was thought more prudent to regain the support of the Brodricks, and the Chancellor's name was included in the proposal submitted to the Cabinet for appointing Lords Justices when Grafton should finally quit Ireland. Soon afterwards it was announced that Carteret would be Lord-Lieutenant, to the

[1] To T. Brodrick, M.P., 28th Dec., 1723.—*MS.*

[2] Brodrick's Correspondence, V.—*MS.*

[3] St. John Brodrick to his father, 11th Jan., 1723.

infinite satisfaction of his friends in Ireland, though little to his own. He did not hide from himself or the friends he confided in that his chief embarrassment would be in dealing with Wood's patent. The Irish Revenue Board had issued an order to the local paymasters not to force the hated tokens in payment of small sums as they had been previously ordered to do. Must they be compelled to rescind their order?[1] The Treasury held it could not be endorsed, that the patent could not be set at defiance by a subordinate and local body, while, on the other hand, the Commissioners held themselves directly responsible to the Irish Parliament, whose decision they feared to disregard.[2] The Cabinet were told that a spirit of alienation was growing in the Irish Parliament, and a presumptuous tendency to self-assertion which it was necessary to put down. Townshend thought "the spirit in Ireland which had been at the bottom of all the noise for some time past was an earnest desire of independency and of setting up for the direction of matters in all respects as a Parliament of England, and he was persuaded that if the coinage of the copper money had been made in Ireland, and the grant given there, the half-pence and farthings had been good and right, and no clamour had been raised about them. It might likewise be observed how the King was used in the manner of their giving the supply; how his Majesty let them into the examination and control of £300,000 a-year of his own hereditary revenue, for the sake of their adding about £60,000 or £70,000 towards the maintaining the troops, which were wholly for their own preservation; upon account of their raising this addition they assumed to themselves the finding fault with the King's disposing of £8,000 or £10,000 a-year of his own money, and according to his own will, and thought it not improper to address his Majesty not to burthen their revenue with such gifts and bounties. Grafton could not but think this to be hard usage, and that in the instances he had named as well as in that of the judicature claimed by the Irish House of Lords, and in many others, it was not to be doubted but the meaning of the Irish Parliament was to grasp at more authority and lessen their subjection to England. It was, therefore, the duty not only of the King's Ministers, but of every Englishman, to be circumspect in what hands the

[1] St. John Brodrick to his father. From London, 14th April, 1724.—*MS.*
[2] *Ibid.*, 20th April, 1724.

government of the country was left. Such treatment as had been given from Ireland must excite a spirit of taking early care to prevent growing evils, and to weaken the hands that promoted these dangerous attempts, which were destructive of the dependency that Ireland ought to be under. He hoped this would not seem hard doctrine to his Grace, and he questioned not but that he would give in to any proposal that should be for his Majesty's service, in the present situation of that Kingdom

Grafton, having occasion to transmit the letter in which these expressions occurred, drew his pen across them that they should be omitted by the copyist; but their significance is riveted rather than shaken by his silent admission how much he felt them. The Secretary reminded his Excellency that the Cabinet were embarrassed by the recent conduct of Archbishop King and that of the Chancellor in the choice of a colleague to act as Lord Justice along with the Speaker. If Grafton would consent it would greatly ease their deliberations as to the course to be pursued in future.[1]

Grafton's sense of failure and despair of anything better than being able to get quietly rid of his responsibilty was not materially lightened by certain assurances of general approval from Townshend at the close of the year. He noted with satisfaction "the determination of the King to let the Lord Chancellor Midleton feel marks of his Majesty's resentment before long."

The silence of the Cabinet in reply to his interrogation as to their reasons for not endorsing his policy must have been felt as a severe reproof. He had, in fact, incurred distrust of his capacity for the post he filled. They did not want to alienate him as a rich and powerful member of their party, and they were ready to transfer his Grace to any post of honour where administrative judgment was not especially called for.

On the death of Primate Lindsay[2] a general wish was conveyed to Southwell on behalf of the best friends of Government in Ireland that King should succeed him. No time, however, was lost in disposing otherwise of the See of Armagh. More than ever, it was thought expedient to repress and repel the disposition which King had shown to vindicate Irish pretensions to local

[1] Townshend to Grafton, 23rd Jan., 1724. Ir. St. Pap.—*MS.*

[2] July, 1724.

preferment, either lay or clerical. Even Wake does not appear to have ventured to hint a preference for him; and Boulter, Bishop of Bristol, was appointed, being a man who could be thoroughly depended on to promote what was termed the English interest. The putting one who was wholly unknown among the clergy and laity in Ireland over the head of the venerable Prelate was greatly lamented, and looked upon with amazement by the local subordinates of Government.[1]

On the eve of departure the unhappy Lord-Lieutenant was obliged to inform the Secretary of State that the smouldering discontent regarding Wood's half-pence, which his quieting assurances were meant to calm, had suddenly burst forth afresh, in consequence of "paragraphs in several London prints, enforced by private letters, giving fresh alarm to the town, as if the patent was likely to prevail after all, and they were confirmed in that notion by his Excellency's offer to send over papers and witnesses pursuant to the commands he had received. All seemed united, however differing in other matters. Accounts daily came from the country of designs to Address and to associate on the subject.[2]

The question was taken up by the Privy Council, and the feeling there was running quite as strong as elsewhere.

After ten years' comparative silence, Swift once more took up the pen. In the series of invectives known as the Drapier's Letters, he gave articulate voice to the confused discontent of the community, and gradually enlarging the scope of the question at issue, and indulging in unscrupulous exaggerations, he quickened the ferment among all classes and creeds.[3]

The only reply from the Home Office to representations from the Castle were directions to prefer bills of indictment for seditious libel.

On receipt of the Report from the Treasury of the Committee offering to restrict the circulation, Dean Jonathan, as his brethren of London called him, issued another manifesto, calling on tradesmen, farmers, and all others concerned, to combine in refusing to take them in payment. They responded with alacrity in the

[1] Coghill Correspondence, July and August, 1724.—*MS.*
[2] Grafton to Townshend, 29th April, 1724.—*MS.*
[3] Primate Boulter to the D. of Newcastle, 3rd Dec., 1724.

Capital, and in a few weeks their example was followed in Derry and other towns.[1]

Steps were taken by the bankers, brewers, and Guilds of the City of Dublin, supported by numbers of merchants and traders, to refuse the obnoxious tokens, and Sir M. Coghill warned Southwell that even the officers of Revenue and the clerks in the Castle were known to sympathise with the general feeling.[2] The Lords Justices agreed to forward a strong representation to the new Lord-Lieutenant of the reasons why they declined to issue, as directed, the orders sent from the Treasury to the Departments of Customs and Excise, and if further required to carry the orders into effect, they would ask to be relieved from their Executive responsibility.

Meanwhile, Wood had, by leave of the Treasury, set up a Mint at Bristol, where he commenced coining the half-pence and farthings he was entitled to do under his patent. But the Government, notwithstanding their protestations of determination to stand by the Grant, took counsel of prudence so far that an Order in Council was issued, bearing date the 6th of August, 1724, forbidding the importation into Ireland by Wood of more than forty thousand pounds' worth of copper coins.[3]

To make the groove of resistance clear in which Carteret's administration was to run, orders more peremptory than before were sent by the Treasury to the Board of Customs and Excise at Dublin to pay and receive in all transactions under their control the detested tokens, and calling them to account for the part they had taken during the controversy. They denied that they had issued any general orders to prevent the circulation of Wood's tokens, but represented that from the state of disorder the nation was in, and the declarations that had been published by all sorts of people that they would not receive or utter them, they were under the utmost difficulties how to execute the directions of their Lordships. "If their collectors were obliged to take these tokens, such orders would be thought arbitrary, and would bring a difficulty on the Revenue, the whole nation thinking they might safely refuse them, the King having

[1] Nicholson to Wake, 21st Aug., 1724.—*MS.*
[2] To Under-Sec. Southwell, 18th Aug., 1724.—*MS.*
[3] Cal. Treasury Papers, 6th August, 1724.

declared in his patent that none should receive them but such as were willing. The uneasiness that people of all ranks were in was greater than could be imagined by any that were not on the spot."[1]

George Faulkner, the printer of the Drapier's Letters, asked leave to inscribe a complete issue of them to the Chancellor, and sent a copy of the dedication, in which he declared that the author would have been silent had he not had so glorious an example in his Lordship's vindication of the rights of the country. Midleton was at dinner, and desired his servant to tell the messenger that "he would not by any means consent to the dedication, and, if done, he would complain of the printer."[2] The statesman was willing to risk his office rather than forego the fulfilment of his constitutional duty, but not to hazard his reputation for gravity and truth by seeming to adopt the exaggerations of the popular pamphleteer.

[1] Customs House, Dublin, 24th Aug., 1724.—Cal. Treas. Papers.

[2] Endorsement of the original paper, in the Chancellor's handwriting, Sept., 1724.—*MS.*

CHAPTER VIII.

SOUTH SEA SCHEME.

1721.

Walpole in Opposition—Adviser of the Princess—Smoothing Royal Differences—Walpole takes Office—Incorporation of the South Sea Company—The Customs Pledged to Pay the Debt—Halifax raises the Capital to two Millions—Competition between the Bank and the South Sea Directors for Liquidating the National Debt—South Sea Stock at 1,000 per Cent.—Marlborough sells out in time—Market Falls—The Bubble Burst—Committee of Inquiry—Death of Stanhope—Aislabie expelled the House—Death of the Younger Craggs—Suicide of the Elder—Sunderland gives up the Treasury.

TOWNSHEND and Walpole had proved themselves as capable of giving trouble in opposition as evicted Ministers deem it their privilege to do. The Viscount was not yet in a forgiving mood or disposed to make any advance towards reconciliation, but the Member for Lynn grew tired of his Jacobite allies, and daily cogitated with himself how he was to get back to the first armchair at the Treasury Board. He had severed from Stanhope on account of Townshend, but was ready to act with him again, not only formally but thoroughly; for he knew the value of the man, and did not see who else could fill his place with equal efficiency. He had offended and thwarted the King's mistress, incautiously, but on further reflection he was willing to agree to terms of friendship and alliance with her, whatever they might be; not because he could keep his countenance better than he used to do when talking confidentially of blackmail, but because he did not see how the machinery of rule was to be kept going otherwise. Walpole believed what Sarah had always told him, that there was no enmity there, and that when Sunderland's greed of office was satisfied, and his

personal pre-eminence recognised, he had no grudge against him, and that the Earl would be glad to have again for a colleague one who would lighten the weight of his financial responsibilities. Whether the author of the Peerage Bill was willing to abide by the beating he had received at the hands of Walpole, or meant to make an opportunity for risking it again, no one probably could tell; but the victor was not unwilling to aver that he had come to attach less importance to the provisions regarding Scotch Peers, and that if compromise were made on that part of the scheme, he would not be impracticable. Beyond this there seems to be no reason to suppose that he offered, as in the case of the Mutiny Bill, to give up the main issues for which he had contended.

But there was something in his plotting brain more difficult, and better worth accomplishing, than all these. In the Princess of Wales he had at last made a friend, by whom he calculated upon one day gaining ascendancy at Court. Everybody else among politicians either had, or was supposed to have had, a share in embittering the feud between her husband and his father. Caroline had the good sense to deplore it for the sake of her family, and to listen with readiness to Walpole's suggestions for putting an end to it. His position out of office left him free to offer advice for which his recent proof of transcendant ability in Parliament ensured respect; and possessing that rarest of political qualities, moral courage, he won at length her Highness's permission to try and bring the Prince to see that it was his interest as well as duty to make the first advances towards reconciliation. Without her aid, rendered as she alone knew how, he probably would not have risked the experiment, and though at first discouraged, he contrived eventually to succeed. Devonshire and Cowper quite as earnestly desired to see the miserable quarrel brought to an end, and they daily invoked her aid for its accomplishment. It was inevitable that any movement of the kind, thus originating and supported, should, in the view of many, seem to be but strategy to bring back the alienated Whigs; and it is probable that pressure was brought to bear upon members of the Cabinet to dissuade them from hearkening to the readmission of those who had proved so unyielding yokefellows. Sunderland was willing to resume Ministerial relations with Townshend and Walpole, leaving Royal enmities unap-

peased. But Walpole, who acted throughout in confidence with Devonshire, steadily refused, and warned Sunderland that upon no other basis than that which he had offered could Government rely on the support they wanted in Parliament for the clearing the arrears of Royal debts. It was this that brought George I. to see the necessity of granting a full parental amnesty.[1]

Without the support of his son's friends in Parliament, Government could not have Walpole; and he was after all the only Minister who could always find money. Secretary Craggs was authorised accordingly to express the willingness of the King that there should be oblivion of family feuds, without any formal terms of accommodation on either side, provided the Prince would write a dutiful letter expressing his desire, and that of the Princess, to come to Court as formerly, and to resume their residence at St. James's. Cowper advised them to stipulate for the care and control of their children. After prolonged negotiation, the thread of which seemed repeatedly snapped by the vehemence of half-stifled resentments, the Heir Apparent conceded all that was required, and the question of the restoration of the children was left in abeyance. Caroline at this time was tempted to distrust Walpole, whom she did not scruple to accuse of bribing her husband to submit to everything else by obtaining leave to have a separate residence. It is a curious proof of the subtlety and effrontery of the man that, despite prejudices seemingly so insurmountable, he should deliberately set about winning, not merely the toleration of the Princess, but her confidence, at the risk of losing that of the King, and, as all this could not be done in a day or in the dark, that he should have succeeded in gaining his end without paying the forfeit. By his own account he carried everything he wanted in the Closet by the help of the Duchess of Kendal, "who was Queen of England as much as ever woman was."[2]

He assured Cowper that he had shaken the influence of Bernsdorff by convincing his master that he had bought up the orders for the pay of the foreign troops at fifty per cent.[3] But to get the Royal debts paid without taking the opposite party

[1] Walpole in conversation with Etough.—Mem. *MS.*

[2] Walpole to Cowper.

[3] *Idem.*

into coalition there was no way save that of winning back the adherence of Leicester House; and Townshend and Walpole had consequently *carte blanche* to promise anything and everything that might be necessary for the purpose. So rapid was the progress of Ministerial mesmerism that by the middle of April complete reticence was observed with respect to Court affairs by the Princess towards Archbishop Wake, till then unreservedly trusted; and by her favourite, Lady Cowper, the magic change was noted as amazing: "How has Walpole got so far power over them that they don't see and know their best friends but through the perspective he holds to their eyes?"[1] The children were sent back. The Prince was received in audience; the Grenadiers mounted guard at Leicester Fields. The reconciliation was complete before the German busy-bodies were let into the secret, and when Stanhope superciliously explained to Bothmar that it was deemed necessary to observe mystery to the last, as so good a thing was to be accomplished, the mercenary marplot burst into tears.

Cowper and Walpole said they did not want offices, they were content with the credit of having made peace in the Royal Family. Cowper alone was probably sincere. He said he would attend the Cabinet if they summoned him, but he would take no place; for infirmities and fifty-five winters made him wish for nothing so much as repose and freedom. He had fortune enough to live independently; he was tired of Court life and all the sacrifices it entailed. The Duke of Kingston he thought had behaved shabbily towards him about the Privy Seal; and it would serve him right if he were forced to give it up. Spiteful people would be ready to say that he was sullen because the task of peace-maker had not been altogether left to him. But what signified such considerations in comparison with health and ease? He would accept office no more. He held to his resolution, content with his wife's having the Gold Key recently held by the Duchess of St. Albans. After some delay he withdrew for good into the country. Before he left he commended strongly for advancement one who in due time was destined to become the most illustrious of his successors.

Philip Yorke was already rising in reputation at the Bar sufficiently to make it worth the while of Government to enlist him

[1] Diary, 15th April, 1720.

on their side in the wordy war at Westminster. Henry Pelham engaged on his behalf his brother's interest at Lewes, and thither, consequently, he bent his steps in April, 1719, and the following year he was made Solicitor-General.

Newcastle had brought his brother Henry Pelham into Parliament for Seaford, and in accordance with family traditions—reward first, and service afterwards—he was made Treasurer of the Chamber. In a maiden speech, he moved an Address of thanks to the King for proposing the appropriation of insurance on ships and merchandise in support of the Civil List. He was seconded by Walpole, with whom from that day Pelham linked his political fortunes, and under whom he served his financial apprenticeship. Soon afterwards he became Member for Sussex, and represented the county for the rest of his life.

After the first effusion of joy, murmurings multiplied on all sides by reason of the many who, thinking they had shown patriotic zeal if not appreciable power to help forward the Royal making up, found to their chagrin that they had only made away with their subordinate importance; and, on the plea of no more room, were to be quietly dropped. Walpole himself was not contented—he might have had the Exchequer and welcome; but he put aside the notion, swearing that he would not serve under anybody. Thus Aislabie remained on to his ruin; and Walpole re-entered the Cabinet as Paymaster-General. His influence with the Princess did not prevent her husband from holding Stock in the latest "bubbles," as the further issues of South Sea Bonds were familiarly called. The allotment list being full, it was suggested that his Royal Highness should subscribe twenty thousand at one hundred and fifty, and the Princess ten, displacing a good many whose names had been entered previously and whose dissatisfaction contributed to make it known that Leicester House was concerned in new ventures. Then came a message from the King suggesting that the debt on foot of the Civil List should be paid by the Treasury with the Company's paper. Walpole and Craggs are said to have turned to private account the rapid rise consequent thereupon. Other offers were made, but rejected without scruple at the instance of Walpole, who, in the hearing of not a few at Westminster, silenced Pulteney with the summary logic: "I tell you, sir, we will hear of no other proposals, for these will do." The Prince

having thus contributed to paying off his father's debts, told his advisers that he expected as much to be done for him when he was King. Already, however, the zenith of national infatuation had been passed and the "bubbles" had begun to waver and to droop. Shippen, in his downright way, more than once impugned the conduct of Craggs and Walpole. But the majority in Parliament were too deeply engaged in maintaining public confidence in the pretended way of making haste to be rich to care for prognostics of coming evil. Some day or other a reverse might come, but long ere then each one flattered himself that he would have had his turn and got clear of the risk. Though baffled for a time in legislation, Sunderland was bent on being supreme. How long he might have held by Stanhope in Executive partnership none can tell; but that he would ever willingly have been content to trust Townshend or Walpole on a footing of equality in Cabinet can hardly be believed. Carteret at most could only aspire to the position of Second Lieutenant, while Stanhope held that of First. But the fatal consequences of Government identification with the South Sea scheme was destined to put an end ere long to an ascendancy that for a time seemed to be infrangible.

Sunderland had lost little of his influence in Parliament or at Court by his defeat on the Peerage Bill, and Stanhope's visit to Paris having obtained a decree excluding the Pretender from France sealed the triumph of their foreign policy. They could afford, without incurring the suspicion of weakness, to invite notable schismatics to join the Government once more. On the other hand, the men who by their well-concerted revolt from party allegiance had won a signal victory in Parliament could, without loss of dignity, again take office. Bolton made way for Grafton, as Viceroy of Ireland. Townshend became President of the Council. Boscawen, having married Marlborough's niece, was gratified with a Peerage. He had been found a serviceable whip in former days, and had occasionally proved ready to say a hard word when it was thought useful. A postponed competitor for distinction embalmed his awkward affectation of courtly *airs* in the well-known quotation:—

Optat ephipia bos,

which someone in mischief told Lord Falmouth was specially

pointed at him. On asking him who dared to call him bos, he was informed it was only old Horace. Mistaking this for the brother of the statesman, the master of piebald teams angrily threatened that if the Postmaster-General did not make Horace behave himself, he would make all his votes in hand run against him.

With continuing peace, the profits and perquisites of paymaster were not sufficient to satisfy Walpole; and he retired to Houghton after a friendly conference with Craggs, intimating that he did not contemplate returning to town for the rest of the year. To keen observers the reunion of Princes and Statesmen seemed "far from sincere, though it might by degrees become so, and the appearances and consequences of it might become the same as if it were so: a melancholy truth," as Atterbury termed it, whereof he felt bound to give frank warning to the exiled court lest they should cherish groundless hopes of better days at hand.[1]

Bernsdorff soon discerned his master's discontent with the too candid tone of security which characterised the reconciled chiefs. Sunderland's overweening sense of power was the theme of comment among all who were brought into immediate contact with him. Harley, it was said—no doubt with a view to its being repeated by the Baron in the Closet—"never had the power or the insolence of Lord Sunderland."

On Grafton's designation as Viceroy, Chancellor Midleton's friends believed that he must give place to another. His obduracy and that of his brother regarding the Peerage Bill could not be forgiven. Resentment had not cooled: would the opportunity be now taken of gratifying it? After many years of varied and responsible duty "he had not learned to be subservient enough, and though his fortune was not great, he would be able to live independent and yet handsomely."[2] There were difficulties, however, in choosing a successor—some professional, some political; and the details, had they been preserved, would probably not be worth recounting. Chief Baron Gilbert paid a visit to London about this time; and it was rumoured that he was to be promoted; but either he failed to satisfy his patron's impatience to carry matters with a higher hand than hitherto in

[1] Letter to James III., 6th May, 1720.

[2] Midleton to his brother, 12th June, 1720.—*MS.*

Ireland, or he thought himself more secure in the Court of Exchequer; he came back as he went; and Midleton was suffered to retain his judicial office for some years longer. But in the next nomination of Lords Justices he was omitted.

When Harley, in 1710, became Lord Treasurer, he had a floating debt to deal with of nearly ten millions. On his suggestion a Joint Stock Company was formed with a nominal capital of nine millions, the shareholders being the creditors of the Treasury to whom that amount was due. Under the Act of Incorporation they were to receive, until paid off, interest at six per cent. on "Bonds" assignable by ordinary transfer. To render these marketable, existing customs on wine, vinegar, tobacco, East India goods, wrought silks, and whale-fins, were made perpetual and appropriated to pay off the capital debt at twelve months' notice after 1716; and splendid promises were further held out to the Company of commercial privileges to trade to all parts of the Southern Seas, save those which belonged to Portugal. The idea was not altogether new, a like expedient, to a much less amount, having been embodied in an Act of William[1] for increasing the capital of the Bank of England during the Administration of Godolphin, the soundness and success of which had not been questioned.

Under the Treaty of Utrecht, Spain gave up the exclusive supply of negroes from Africa for the whole of her Colonies and Plantations; and this, entitled the Assiento Contract, was vested in Harley's new Company, called by his admirers his masterpiece. Halifax, in 1715, obtained from the Directors considerable advances in cash, for which additional duties were mortgaged to them, and they began to fit out ships freighted with merchandise for the Southern Seas. The value of their stock steadily rose, and in 1716, Walpole, then at the head of the Treasury, negotiated certain abatements of interest as part of a plan for the reduction of debt, and the establishment of a Sinking Fund. In 1718, Aislabie transferred to the South Sea Company other sources of revenue to form part of their capital to the extent of £1,746,000, bearing interest at five per cent. On this ill-fated model was subsequently framed the memorable project for subscribing the whole residue of the public debt to form part of the capital of either the Bank of England or the South Sea Company,

[1] 8th and 9th William, chap. xix.

whichever should bid higher for the privilege. To float the scheme various lotteries were announced, which tended still further to excite speculative cupidity in an ever-widening circle, and to confuse the public sense of the solid grounds, if any such there were, of calculation on which the egregious design could with safety rest.

On the 22nd of January, 1720, the Chancellor of the Exchequer informed the House of Commons that the South Sea Company offered to pay a sum of three millions and a half in cash, in four instalments, for an assignment to them as Stock of a great portion of the National Debt,[1] with power to issue Stock to that amount "at any time until Lady-day, 1721, whereupon the Directors of the Bank offered instead to give five millions. Not to be outdone, the South Sea Company bid seven and a half millions, which Aislabie clutched at with well-feigned patriotic satisfaction. Strange to say, the Bank sought to cap this bidding with a further advance, in which they offered £1,700 of their Stock in lieu of every £100 of long annuities. The very rumours of these sanguine dealings with Government had raised the Company's stock to one hundred and twenty-six at the close of 1719, and Parliament assembled to discuss the enactments necessary in a fever of speculation, ill suited for inquiry or reasoning. Ministers were too deeply committed in private negotiation with the directors of the Company to desert them in the reckless competition, while Walpole contended vehemently that a preference should be shown to the Bank. He urged the greater security offered by the latter, and did not shrink from deprecating the whole scheme as one full of hazard, and unworthy of the dignity of Government. It was a scheme tending to pervert the spirit of the nation from trade and industry to the pernicious habit of stock jobbing. It held out a dangerous lure for decoying the unwary to their ruin by a false prospect of gain, and to part with the gradual profits of their labour for imaginary wealth. He insisted that if the Company's proposal were accepted the legal price of their stock ought to be limited. In vain he dwelt on

[1] In Walpole's handwriting was found a summary, viz. :—

	£	s.	d.
Original capital of the Company	11,746,844	8	10
Purchase of the Redeemable Debts...	15,924,218	12	10¼
Irredeemables	15,057,493	13	8
Including the original capital, the whole stock is ...	42,728,556	15	4¼

the miseries and confusion which then prevailed in France from the adoption of similar measures; in vain he urged that, as the whole success of the scheme must depend on the rise of the stock, the great principle of the project was an evil of the first magnitude, raising artificially its value by exciting and keeping up a general infatuation, and by promising dividends out of funds which could not be adequate for the purpose. He foretold how illusory the scheme would prove, and that the public ere long would find the whole but a dream. His warning availed nothing, and the preference was given to the South Sea, the Bill being subsequently carried by a majority of three to one,[1] for the influence of the Company at Westminster was strong, and the influence of the Treasury at the South Sea House was paramount. Besides, Sir J. Bateman, M.P. for the City, Shepheard, M.P. for Cambridge; George Pitt, for Wareham; Sir G. Casnall, for Leominster; H. Townshend, for Yarmouth; Sir Theodore Janssen, for the Isle of Wight; F. Tench, for Southwark; J. Sawbridge, for Cricklade; and F. Eyles, for Devizes, performed the twofold duty of legislators and directors. Bateman, the son of a Dutch merchant, who had amassed a large fortune in London, took a prominent part in the original plan of Harley for the liquidation of the Army and Navy arrears; and he was brought into Parliament for Ilchester, then a Government borough; and on the change of parties in 1714, he found it convenient to join with Mr. Smith, Teller of the Exchequer, in support of the new Administration. Walpole found both ready to his hand when devising his enlarged copy of Harley's South Sea scheme; and Bateman was named Deputy Governor of the Company. He was more than ever made much of in Ministerial circles; and to the surprise of many, perhaps his own, he found himself the accepted suitor of Lady Anne Spencer, nor did his friends in the City marvel less when the great Duke and the loftier Duchess stood sponsors at the baptism of their first-born. While the golden day of national speculation was still young, the Prince of Wales was invited to become Governor of the South Sea Company, with the propitiatory offering of several thousands a year. But he had not enjoyed this all-envied distinction long, when it was suggested that the King himself might occupy the position, and in order to enable him to do so,

[1] 23rd March, 1720.

an Act was framed by direction of the Cabinet, and carried through both Houses, the scope and language of which would hardly be credited if they were not of statutable record. The Act enabled his Majesty to hold shares and receive dividends without being liable, in any event, to calls or losses.

Plausible as the expanded speculation had become under Aislabie for granting exceptional privileges to the Company, there was still a remnant found who were not deceived. Beside Oxford and Cowper, Devonshire forewarned the Peers of the dangers borne in its womb. It was a Trojan horse originating in treachery, nurtured in deceit, introduced with pomp, but big only with disappointment and ruin. Out of doors all were not carried away by the prevalent infatuation. From Ireland, Archbishop King expostulated with Primate Wake on what seemed to him the peril of the course the Government were pursuing.

From the first he distrusted the South Sea scheme, and warned his friends in private against being drawn into the net. His anxiety rose with the price, and when it touched three hundred per cent. he reduced to form his reasons for unabated misgiving, but would not suffer them to be printed because he understood that whoever said anything against the South Sea was looked on as disaffected to the Government,"[1] a suspicion that did not beseem one who was required to act as one of the Lords Justices of the Kingdom. Nor was he the only episcopal seer of the time. When Pope was the guest of Atterbury early in the year, one of the presages of evil that filled the Prelate's thoughts was of the insecurity of those around them on every side, who were yielding to the temptations of the hour, and when events began to realise the foresight of his friend he wrote alluding to their interchange of sad forebodings: "I have cause, since I last waited on you at Bromley, to look upon you as a prophet, from whom oracles may be had, were mankind wise enough to go thither to consult you. The fate of the South Sea Company has, much sooner than I expected, verified what you told me. Most people thought the time would come, but no man prepared for it. As for the few who have the good fortune to remain with half of what they imagined they had (among which is your humble servant), I would have them sensible of their felicity,

[1] To Archbishop Wake, February, 1720.

and convinced of the truth of old Hesiod's maxim, who, after half of his estate was swallowed by the directors of those days, resolved that half to be more than the whole. Does not the fate of the people put you in mind of two passages, one in Job, the other from the Psalmist:

"'Men shall groan them out of the City, and hiss them out of their place.'

"'They have dreamed out their dream, and awaking have found nothing in their hands.'"[1]

Defoe availed himself of his incognito to utter what his paymasters in high places would not have thanked him for whispering; and from his hermitage at Stoke Newington sent forth a piercing cry against the infatuation of the day. When grave warning of the danger of gambling with the public debt proved vain, the anonymous Tribune tried to rail and banter his countrymen out of their credulity. In mockery he announced a finer scheme:

"The projector, by long study, has attained to a certain method of melting down carpenters' chips and sawdust, &c., and running them into planks and boards of all lengths and sizes. Hereby all gentlemen, builders and others, may, upon ten days' notice, be furnished with boards and planks adapted exactly to the dimensions they want, at least twenty-five per cent. cheaper than yet has been known. These boards will be free from sap and knots, and delivered grained or not grained as desired. The projector promises himself that he shall shortly be able to give them a tincture of marble shade, or any other fine stone colour, which shall exceed all painting. The composition in these boards has a secret virtue which prevents their shrinking, and destroys all vermin that come near them. Proposals for erecting a company, and raising a joint-stock of one million five hundred thousand pounds, on very advantageous terms to the subscribers, will shortly be published, and the projector will be glad (in the interim) of an opportunity to confer with any gentleman of ingenuity upon so beneficial a scheme; and for that purpose will give daily attendance at exchange time, at the Cock, in Birchin Lane." On another instrument he played a yet more plaintive note.

"South Sea Stock has made such a consumed noise of late that

[1] Pope to Atterbury, 23rd September, 1720.

abundance of our country gentlemen and rich farmers are upon the roads from several parts of the Kingdom, all expecting no less than to ride down again, every man in his coach and six. If a friend's advice is worth anything, let them take care, for though there are some prizes, they may find many more blanks; and they may happen to lose all in an hour in 'Change Alley that the industry and care of their ancestors have been scraping together for some ages."[1]

Describing the collapse of Law's Mississippi Scheme, which foreshadowed the coming disaster in England, the desertion in Paris of the lately crowded *Quinquam poix* was set forth in no mincing terms. "People there were running as precipitately from the scene of their delusion as ever they flocked to it. There was little money stirring, provisions grew dear, and, as stock-jobbing was over, multitudes who came thither with no less prospect than getting estates, found it now difficult to get bread."[2] Whitehall frowned, with reasons of its own, at such distempered admonitions. Aislabie put on airs of disdain at the futility of such malice, and superciliously pointed to quotations of *South Sea Actions*, as they were still called, at four hundred premium. Craggs, who was concerned on his own account and that of his father, that the stock should not go down till they and their friends had realised, and who could not make up their minds to get out of the marvellous venture while there was any hope of its going up further, was very austere in Council about curbing the licentiousness of the Press. If he ascribed the dropping fire that wounded him to a masked battery furtively fed with Government powder and shot, he had not the courage to say so, and the veiled prophet of Stoke Newington went his way.

But the heart of Defoe continued to be moved within him as he saw the whole people more than ever given over to the idolatry of Mammon. A letter to his friend Mist, enclosed in confidence a new project, professedly from one whose life had been spent in "planning and building castles in the air, yet could never get a lodging in any one of them."[3] His happy thought was to provide the inhabitants of the Metropolis, whose habitual thirst was well known, with ale of superior quality,

[1] Defoe, Mist's *Journal*, 29th March, 1720.
[2] *Daily Post*, 4th April, 1720.
[3] 30th April, 1720.

brewed at a central establishment of unrivalled dimensions, and capable of supplying subscribers of temperate reputation with the liquor they loved, by means of subterranean pipes like water by the New River Company: capital ten millions.

Defoe, under various pseudonyms, sought to warn the credulous from touching the leprous hand of speculation; but his warnings were in vain. In April South Sea Stock continued to be 530 per cent. At the beginning of June it was 890 per cent., and after Midsummer it reached a 1,000 premium. Meanwhile at Paris Mississippi bonds had gone up to sixty times their original price, and nearly every bank and palace in Christendom shared in their possession. The epidemic grew more and more contagious in Paris and London. The family of the Marquis of Powys were said to have won £80,000, the newly-created Duke of Chandos half a million sterling, and Thomas Pitt (afterwards Lord Londonderry) was conspicuous for the sale of like investments in Paris at prodigious profit. While the fever was at its height Marlborough was dissuaded by his astute spouse from giving heed to Sunderland's further suggestions of money to be easily made; and before the fall set in she insisted on his selling out all he held, whereby he netted £100,000.[1]

Of the fragmentary shreds of fact that remain of the fatuous doings of the time, one or two others may serve in illustration. A female relative of the young wife of Sunderland speaks of "her goodness as being so mindful of her absent friends as to secure a five hundred pounds subscription (in the latest issue of South Sea Stock) which money was now doubled."[2] And far down in the country fair Judith's cousin only lamented that nobody would lend her another five hundred pounds whereby she might profit by the friendship of the First Lord of the Treasury. Forbidden fruits abounded of every size and flavour, and the austere capitalist had as little compunction in asking as the flighty dame of fashion.

Unruffled, the current of jobbing flowed to the very brink of the abyss. Onlookers held their breath in the sultry air, and listened for the impending storm; but gaily-rigged yachts continued to float down stream to the last, running foul of one

[1] Letters to Mrs. Clayton.

[2] Mrs. Molesworth, from Axminster, 25th June, 1720.

another now and then without ostensible damage or danger, some of them tacking just in time, and making for shore. There was great competition among the bigger companies for preferential privileges, which the most solvent and respectable sought like the rest. *The Sun, Hand in Hand,* and *Union* lodged caveats with the Treasury against the Charter sought by the *Royal Exchange* Company, but without success. Side by side is a record of the price of £300,000 the *London Assurance* agreed to pay Government for incorporation, and having paid a third of the sum, and of their asking further time to pay the remainder.[1] Sub-Governor Sir W. Chapman was called in to offer securities for £39,000, and £11,000 in cash a month later on account, when Mr. Aislabie "admonished him to redeem the tallies so deposited by small payments, viz., £5,000 at a time, as the Company should be able, till the whole were redeemed."[2] Secretary Craggs entertained the Foreign Ambassadors on a scale of magnificence his predecessors were unwilling to afford.[3] The country was, presumably, growing rich at an unprecedented pace, and its executive rulers floated with the tide. The journal in whose columns the Minister's magnificence found a record was under his daily control.

A private letter from the Secretary, in a gossiping tone, kept his colleagues at Herrenhausen advised how unbroken by political cares were the pleasant slumbers of Government. A Company had been formed for smelting copper, in which several needy men about town were concerned, and of which the Prince of Wales had been induced, by the offer of a large stipend, to become governor. The shares speedily went to a premium, and the attention of the Treasury was called to the fact that the hopes of profit were based upon certain restrictive statutes being set aside which limited trade. It was impossible to describe what a rage prevailed for South Sea subscription at any price. The crowd of those who held redeemable annuities was such that the Bank obliged to receive them had been forced to set tables with clerks in the streets. No hint was dropped that Craggs and other Ministers were, day by day, wading further and further into the stream.

[1] Treasury Papers Calendar, Sept., 1720.
[2] *Ibid.*, October, 1720.
[3] Mist's *Journal,* 28th June, 1720.

There dined at Lord Sunderland's the day before, the Dukes of Devonshire and Newcastle, Lords Carlisle, Townshend, and Lumley, the Speaker, Walpole, and himself. They got, some very drunk and others very merry.

Alluding, obviously to the prevalent rumours that the great Captain was fast losing his memory and intelligence, Craggs, whose family owed everything to the patronage of Blenheim, adds in gossiping mood, "Would you believe it, the Duke of Marlborough, at a visit he and his good Duchess made at Richmond, told the Prince he was ashamed to see his Royal Highness in such a country house, like a private gentleman, while such an insignificant creature as the Duke of Marlborough was playing the King; that he had, out of decency, attended the Lord Justices once, at the first summons, but that he would return no more. The previous Saturday, at Court, Craggs observed that the Prince talked of the perfect state of his Grace's understanding."[1] A week later Craggs reported that South Sea had gone to about £1,000, and that the price augmented every day.[2] One would have thought this enough to awaken the guardsman of the public safety to a sense of danger.

The contagion of gambling proved as ubiquitous as the small-pox. Henry Pelham, who, by inheritance having little else, had a character for integrity to make, and his brother, whose vast fortune and intense timidity might have been supposed to keep him clear of temptation, had, among the rest, yielded to its spell, without apparently the least consciousness of danger. At the end of July, Charles Stanhope informed the Lord Chamberlain that Mr. Pelham had been with him to say that the Directors of the South Sea had resolved that the new subscription then going on should be "equally divided among the proprietors of their Stock, allowing, as he had since been informed, twenty per cent. for what they had in; but if this should not prove so, and there was any room left for his zeal to exert itself, his Grace might be assured of his diligence."[3] In the same letter, the Secretary to the Treasury reported having forwarded the Lord Chamberlain's application for two small places; and added, in a friendly way, that "he always fancied his Grace's jobs went more

[1] To Stanhope, from the Cockpit, 15th July, 1720.—*MS.*
[2] 22nd July, 1720.—*MS.*
[3] From the Treasury, 28th July, 1720.—*MS.*

roundly when *he* was there, as he should be at the next meeting." Craggs, however, wrote that the resolution of the Directors meant to confine the distribution of the new Stock to existing holders, and that, consequently, all their Court lists of supporters and friends not theretofore subscribers, "were demolished; and though it saved him a great deal of trouble, yet he was sorry he could not do as his Grace desired for his friends, who must be contented to fare like the rest of the world. There was not a scrap of domestic news, except that Walpole had gone out of town; that the Prince had taken the oath of Governor of the Copper Smelting Company; and that the Duke of Richmond patronised another of the same kind." [1]

Some weeks later, the unforeseen but inevitable chill in speculation became for the first time perceptible, and Stanhope, writing from Gohrdt, could only hope that this unaccountable panic would subside before the opening of the session in November, when everything would be done to retrieve the legislative project on which their thoughts were fixed.[2] As Parliament had led the way, nearly all England followed. The Bank and the East India Company shared in the delusive enhancement of their Stock, the former rising to 260, the latter to 445, occasioned partly by the sellers out of the "bubbles," as they were called, beginning to think their money safer elsewhere. At Midsummer the aggregate value at the advanced prices of all the great Stocks was estimated at five hundred millions, or about five times the amount of the current cash of all Europe. If the yearly rent of all the land and houses in Great Britain did not exceed fourteen millions, and their value at sixteen years' purchase, two hundred and twenty-four millions—here was above double the value of the fee simple of all the real property of the nation in this chimerical traffic; while the substantial industry of the realm was in a great degree neglected.[3] As if this were not enough, new devices were employed to draw fresh dupes into the general snare. On the second issue of shares, in lieu of irredeemable annuities, subscribers were to be allowed six months for their instalments at four per cent. A swarm of lesser projects, infinite in variety of fraud, drew their transient

[1] To Newcastle, 2nd Aug., 1720.—*MS.*
[2] To Newcastle, 8th Oct., 1720.—*MS.*
[3] Anderson's "History of Commerce."

vitality from the unnatural heat generated by stock-jobbing in which Government were parties, and before the final dissipation of the popular dream legal measures were actually taken to put down what were called the "bubbles," as calculated to distract the public mind and spoil the market. It ought not, however, to be forgotten that out of this excess of speculation many useful and honourable undertakings took their rise, which, carefully guided and matured, not only survived the incidents of the time, but are with us even unto this day.

Not content with preferential profits, the South Sea Directors induced Ministers to put in force statutes against their comparatively feeble competitors in delusive joint-stock companies, and a shower of writs of *scire facias* suddenly fell, like hail in harvest, on 'Change Alley and the parts adjacent. "Bubbles" vanished by the score; those who had made by them were careful to retire taciturnly for the enjoyment of their gains, while those who had lost wreaked their disappointment on the treachery of those in high places, who, they said, were meanly jealous of those who had feebly imitated their example. There was an exceeding bitter cry in the City, and the would-be monopolists of fictitious wealth grew nervous lest despondency and distrust should grow infectious. An offer was accordingly published of a further subscription of a million and a-half on the 24th August for taking over so much more of the Public Debt at a thousand per cent., with two years in which to pay up the instalments. But, though taken in the space of three hours, some atmospheric influence depressed the selling value, and to dispel the injurious misgivings created by the improvident resort to *scire facias*, notice was published that for the next twelve years the dividend on their Stock would be fifty per cent. For forty-eight hours this magnificent promise was believed, and the New Stock rose. A highly-respectable and influential meeting of shareholders voted their thanks for this crowning proof of the Directorial foresight and generosity. The curtain fell amid applause, and when it rose again three weeks later, South Sea Stock had silently but sadly fallen to 400, half its recent price. To arrest the thaw in public confidence, the Directors offered to reduce the terms of their last scheme from a thousand pounds to four hundred, but all in vain. By the beginning of October no more than 175 could be obtained for the Stock, while the Company's

bonds were at 12 per cent. discount. Thenceforth the decline became daily more rapid.

Disappointment and dismay at the failure of reiterated promises that the market would recover drove men to seek consolation and counsel in various quarters. A meeting of South Sea stockholders on the 17th October to consider expedients for retrieving their affairs, came to no definite resolution, and was broken up in such a storm of passionate reproach as compelled the Chairman, who was one having authority, to threaten the reading of the Riot Act.[1] Rich and luxurious persons of all degrees found it impossible to realise their imagined fortunes, and hastened as fast to expedients of economy too late, as they had previously hastened to be rich too soon. Coachmakers advertised for sale, at unprecedentedly low prices, carriages of the best description that had been hardly used; and jewellers offered to array parsimonious beauty in magnificence at a cost hitherto unknown. Private bankers could no longer make advances as they used to do; deadly suspicions, whispered at first, but by degrees fretfully muttered, that they had gone too deep with their deposits in South Sea shares, shook their stability; and before Christmas several had stopped payment. Privation, grief, and ruin spread all round. Stanhope, Townshend, Argyll, and Midleton had shunned the glittering lure; but too many of their colleagues had yielded to the spell. The rich and noble were conspicuous in ruin. Lords Lonsdale and Irwin were so crippled by their losses that they did not disdain to ask for colonial appointments. The Prince of Wales, having made £40,000 as Chairman of his Copper Company, narrowly escaped the consequences of its failure by withdrawing in time. Walpole had opposed the passing of the South Sea Act for the reduction of the National Debt by the sale of the long annuities to Sir John Blunt's Company; but there is no proof that he foresaw the danger to the national welfare and credit involved in the unlimited issue of speculative securities: and he had no scruple about taking a considerable amount of them when first issued, and selling out when they had risen to ten times the price. Sunderland dabbled largely like the rest in the treacherous stream, and when it began to decline was afraid the First Lord of the Treasury would be reproached with selling out, until his

[1] Mist's *Journal*, 22nd Oct., 1720.

losses were very great. In the general dilapidation the house of Bentinck did not escape. Henry, second Earl of Portland, a kind and hospitable man, made liberal use of the vast accumulations left by his father, and of the fortune brought him by his wife, a co-heiress of Lord Gainsborough. The evil spirit of impatient acquisition seemed in his youth to have had no hold over him, yet when the tempter came, in the guise of universal gold finder, he yielded like all around him. In the memorable crash, for the first time in his life he knew what it was to feel pinched. Not long before he had been gratified with a Marquisate and a Dukedom, and he had since then lived in a style of greater luxury than ever. He had not the courage now to retrench, and sooner than cut down his establishment, and own how far he had been duped, asked for public employment abroad. The first easy post that offered was that of Governor of Jamaica, which he held during the remainder of his life.

When the storm burst, Walpole was in Norfolk fox-hunting, or figuring to himself in day dreams or on paper how the old family home might be extended or rebuilt in a fashion more fitting the residence of one who should be King, perhaps, or, at all events, over-king, hereafter. Sundry designs offered themselves, and were laid aside. He probably did not know exactly what he wanted; but something of a house he did want, bigger, if not better, than Euston, or Rainham, or Holkham, and for upholstery and pictures money would provide them. As yet, he was not ready to begin; but, though he was no philosopher in pen or speech, his mother wit told him that in this, as in all other joys of life, anticipation was more enjoyable than fruition. Ere the frost had made the ground too hard for sport, he was called to town by colleagues and particular friends in the Bank Direction, who, frightened at the aspect of things in the City and all around, wanted somebody who would tell them, what was best to do. Yet he tarried long before ordering post horses for coming to the rescue; and when at last he came, and leading Directors of the East India Company and South Sea met their more cautious rivals of Threadneedle Street to hear what the Paymaster-General would advise, they were little comforted at finding how much he had to hear and how little he had to say. Again and again they met, every day bringing new facts and doubts, vain regrets, and incredible rumours, all tending to

the same dread issue—general stop-payment. We may take for granted, that when his conferences at the Bank were over he had others at the Cockpit, where his help was as anxiously looked for by the First and the Second Lord of the Treasury. It shows how short even his clear eye-sight fell in measuring the actual danger, that he proposed, after time for reflection, a discount of £3,000,000 of South Sea Bonds by the Bank, which it was supposed would go to a premium, and thereby revive the pulse of general confidence. The proposal was clutched at eagerly, even made publicly known, and for a few hours talked of as a timely stroke of finance; for did not the Stock go up from 175 to 200? But there the mildew of misgiving crept silently over them, and they withered down rapidly again, and the Bank hesitated to renew the contract.

Walpole's suggested accommodation provoked severe comment from those who held Bank Stock. The favourite lady-in-waiting at Leicester House called it a very wicked bargain[1] for the Bank and for everybody else. The immediate effect was to cause a rally in South Sea shares; but next day several private banks stopped payment notwithstanding; and in a few hours the Directors felt obliged to announce that they had cancelled the transaction.

Another sickening pause of perplexity ensued, and Walpole at length saw that without some trenchant act of legislation nothing would do. Ruin fell suddenly and widely upon high and low. At Dublin Castle, on the 18th of October, Lord Fitzwilliam showed a letter, just received from London, in which were named Kingston, Wharton, all the Boltons, the Scarboroughs, Carlisle, Lonsdale, all the Princes' servants, Hillsborough, the Cockburns, the Foresters, Ladies Gainsborough, Burlington, Pembroke, Hervey, and Granville, as involved in the disaster.

Express after express was sent to Hanover by order of the Cabinet, describing the condition of affairs, and recommending his Majesty's immediate return. By the advice of Stanhope, George I. hastened his journey, in order that the Houses might be summoned to re-assemble; but nothing definite was ready to be laid before them, and on a prorogation to the 8th of December, despondency again sent down the price of Securities; for

[1] Memorandum Lady Swindon, I., 18.

everyone wanted to sell and nobody wanted to buy, till disappointment and rage reached a height that, apart from politics, had never previously been known. Who was to blame, and how should the truth be riddled out of the delinquent authors and abettors of the general infatuation and misery?

In reply to the Speech from the Throne, which only recommended men of all parties to club their wits for the restoration of public credit, great diversity of opinion broke forth. Pulteney, though still condemned to wait for re-admission with his friends to office, consented to move an Address in general terms, full of the promise of good things to come, but couched in phrases unexceptionally vague. Jekyll, for the more independent Whigs; Shippen, for the extreme Tories; and Molesworth, on behalf of the sufferers within and without doors, found it difficult at first to insert a pledge of searching inquiry into the causes of calamity, and of determination to inflict exemplary punishment upon those chiefly compromised, whoever they might be. The existing Parliament had begun with such vows of vengeance on their predecessors, and they could not better close their septennial career than by like proceedings.

Craggs and Yorke were supported by Walpole in resisting a course which they too well knew would lead them fast and far. If the City were on fire, all good men should join to put out the flames, and wait till the cinders cooled to prosecute the incendiaries, if such there were. Good surgeons staunched the wound which they found bleeding, before they sought to find how it was inflicted; and there would be time enough to investigate the financial errors said to have been committed, and discover who were accountable for them, when the panic was arrested, and men could look dispassionately on the causes of the evil. But it grew hourly more evident that there was much undisclosed which Government would endeavour to conceal. Had Aislabie had the courage of innocency he would have led the fight for impunity instead of leaving it as long as he could to the special pleading of colleagues more free to fence because individually they had less to fear. Walpole stood on the vantage ground of being able to recall his now half-forgotten opposition to the reckless measures of Aislabie for throwing slice after slice of the

revenue into a hotch-pot of national gambling for the liquidation of debt out of unrealised gains in distant climes. The Paymaster-General, who would not be listened to when there was time to beware, was now regarded with breathless hope and expectation when he told the House that he had already bestowed some thoughts on a plan to restore public credit, which at a proper time he would submit to their wisdom.

The South Sea Company were ordered to lay their accounts in full before a Select Committee. Two classes of sufferers threw themselves at its feet for reparation—the proprietors of Government Stock, who had consented to be made shareholders instead in the South Sea Company, under Aislabie's Conversion Acts, and the subscribers, at high prices, to the new issues of Stock by the Company at extravagant premiums. Would the Legislature interpose to redistribute gains and losses? The total nominal assets and liabilities stood at nearly £38,000,000 sterling, accumulated by a great variety of transactions with the public and with the Treasury. Could the Legislature retrospectively adjudicate upon this mass of claims, and grapple with their infinite diversity by the invention of any rule whether inflexible or elastic? It was comparatively easy to track the footsteps of deception and fraud through the labyrinth of negotiation between directors and officials; and more than one report of committees, sitting with closed doors, named the leading culprits and recommended the sequestration of their estates. In the bitterness of disillusion, suspicions rapidly grew of huge gains by the managers who, it was taken for granted, must have personally benefited largely by the losses of the public; and similar imputations were flung broadcast upon everyone in Government, directly or indirectly cognisant of the favouritism and jobbing that notoriously prevailed in the allotment of shares; and in preferential permission to withdraw. Victims there must be ere the thirst for vengeance could be stayed; and in times of terror when were appeals for justice ever fairly heard? It turned out finally that many of the worst suspicions reiterated at the top of the popular voice were misplaced, and some of them were groundless. The whole of the estates of the Directors put together did not amount to a million sterling; and there were some men in high places against whom no conscious sin

could be brought home, save that which in Constitutional Government is the commonest and the most mischievous of all—that of having weakly and culpably gone with the stream. But there were others who justly trembled at the remembrance of deeper responsibility, and a great fear fell upon all who, whether in the City or at Whitehall, had profited by the opportunity to run up fortunes without foundation.

Walpole has been praised for not availing himself of the financial crisis which he was not responsible for bringing about. But he was too shrewd a discerner of spirits to make such a mistake. He saw that the imperious head of the Treasury was certain to be damaged in the crisis; and that his best chance of the reversion lay in his not seeming shabbily eager to anticipate the event. He framed and brought in and carried an elaborate measure for distributing the liabilities of the insolvent Association between the East India Company and the Bank upon certain conditions; by which public confidence might be restored. Though opposed vehemently as unjust to the great financial institutions that were not to blame, and though little understood by the bulk of the community at large, the proposal had a certain effect in allaying the violence of the storm; and eventually it was never put into operation. Other measures followed of a more equitable and less pretentious kind. Parliament recognising the indefeasibility of the debt due by the nation to the creditors of Government, notwithstanding their credulous acceptance of South Sea Stock in lieu of their original claims on the Treasury, Walpole proposed to engraft, as he called it, £9,000,000 of South Sea Stock on the capital of the Bank, and a like sum on that of the East India Company. He professed to found his calculations on the accuracy of the accounts and documents laid before the Committee of Inquiry; for, though many doubts probably suggested themselves, he saw that the hour of national agony was no time to be nice. He had the rare courage to shut his eyes and to refuse to open them, where ignorance was safety though not bliss, and where it would have been folly to be wise. What want of principle! exclaims the moralising metaphysician; but metaphysicians do not govern the world, and Walpole, who had made up his mind to govern his part of it, went his own way and held to it. The great institutions thus called on to submit to contribution of their credit to an extent that might endanger

them, protested and petitioned, but in vain. Some amendments of detail were made in the measure, which occupied in Committee several weeks, and many divisions were critically near. At length the Bill was sent up to the Lords, agreed to, and finally became law.

Shippen, Thomas Brodrick, and Molesworth led the cry for exemplary punishment in the Commons. Four of the South Sea directors were committed to prison, and sangiunary threats abounded against all who had directly or indirectly contributed to bring about so much distress and disaster. Not to be outdone in zeal, the Lords proceeded to examine the officers of the Company, and to commit to custody five more directors. The young Duke of Wharton, whose personal repute was as bad as his father's, seized the opportunity to play the part of Cato, and with many invocations of the spirit of Roman virtue, inveighed against the Ministers indiscriminately under whose rule calamity had befallen the nation. Stanhope, at whose door no portion of the blame had hitherto been laid, and whose indifference to money was generally known, formed the principal object of attack by the President of the Hell-fire Club. He was said to be the modern Sejanus who had sown dissensions in the Royal Family, and countenanced corruption in every branch of Government. It had been confessed by some of the witnesses, who to save themselves were willing to turn approvers that shares in the original South Sea Scheme had been given to persons in office to secure the passing of the ill-fated Act enlarging the capital and scope of the Company. Could the Secretary of State pretend to be ignorant of the fact? Stung by the injustice of the insinuation, Stanhope rose, and with ungovernable passion denounced the malignity of his accuser, and moved a resolution, which was seconded by Townshend, declaring any clandestine gifts or promises of shares for the purpose alleged, to be a scandalous act of corruption. But the warmth of his vindication cost him dear. When the House rose, it was perceived that he was ill, and on reaching home his medical attendant advised cupping. After some hours' sleep, inquiring friends were reassured regarding his condition, but symptoms of apoplexy set in, and after a brief struggle he had ceased to be.[1] When informed of the event George I. retired to his chamber

[1] 5th Feb., 1721.

for several hours; and when at last his attendants were admitted they found him overwhelmed with grief. Few men of his time had greater advantages at starting in ambition's career than Stanhope; and few men turned advantages more quickly to account. Active, clever, good-natured, and unpunctilious, he rose rapidly, winning the support of many friends, and the respect of those who liked him least. He never saw more than one side of a question at a time, but he saw that side clearly; and he had the knack or the luck of fixing his eyes for the most part on that which was about to triumph. When he began to take a prominent part in Opposition, the Tory Cabinet was beginning to be shaken by the schism between Harley and St. John, the folly of the Whigs about Sacheverell was beginning to fade in public recollection, and the fine gold of the peace so long and so anxiously desired was beginning to grow dim. As Minister of a new King surrounded by colleagues of whose confidence and co-operation he was secure, the lines may be said to have fallen to him in propitious if not pleasant places. With them he had floated into power; the time was full of excitement, and the public air was fresh and stimulating. Foreign politics, and more especially Spanish politics, engrossed attention. Had he been content with the part originally assigned him, his memory would have escaped the chief reproach it bears of having caballed with Sunderland against a trusting colleague. Townshend was hot-tempered, overbearing, and rude, but he was an unresentful man who hated heartily for the time being and scolded roundly those who thwarted him; but, the occasion passed, he kept no grudge or enmity. Both were superior to most of their contemporaries in their indifference to money. They promoted, without nice reference to merit, their respective relatives and friends; but they did not plunder the Exchequer for themselves; and of Stanhope it ought not to be forgotten that in an age of hypocritical and cruel intolerance, he was one of the few who courageously stood forth for the rights of conscience; and that he was about the only politician of the first rank who was ready to risk power in asserting them.

The cry for retributive justice was not hushed to sleep by the progress of Walpole's Bill, which confessedly was founded on the desire if not the hope of an agreement to let byegones be byegones. Aislabie, despairing of acquittal, sought escape in

the resignation of his office, but he was too irretrievably identified with all that had been done amiss to be suffered to elude prosecution. To the Committee he was obliged to confess the truth of the deplorable allegations against him of having by his agents and relatives taken between seven and eight hundred thousand pounds of South Sea Stock when at a premium, out of various allotments, and that in one instance £20,000 had been paid to him by Robert Knight, the Secretary of the Company, as a *douceur*, and without the pretence of any consideration. Arraigned at the bar, he was unable to make any defence worthy of the name, and being committed to the Tower, a Bill was carried for the forfeiture of his estate and effects, and preventing him from quitting the Kingdom. Finally he was expelled the House. Other official delinquents speedily met their fate. Secretary Craggs lay ill of small-pox. His case was not pronounced desperate until the substance of the Committee's report was communicated to him. It left no doubt of his participation in the besetting sin of the day. Fear of disgrace proved more formidable than bodily disease, and in a few days he was numbered with the dead. His father, the Postmaster-General, was branded with similar reproach, and a few weeks later he put an end to his life by poison.

An Act was passed to confiscate his real and personal estate; but by resort to some means unexplained, his daughters were allowed to retain £240,000 between them.[1] A large sum of the once coveted stock was said to have been lodged at Caswall's Bank to the credit of Charles Stanhope, Secretary to the Treasury. On reference to his account, the name was found to have been altered to Stangape; and though it was impossible to produce any individual answering to that appellation he was suffered to escape for the want of identifying proof by a party majority of three. The Duchess of Kendal and Countess Platen were reported to have each received £10,000 worth of Stock; but no evidence being adduced that they exerted their influence in favour of the Company, they were not called upon to refund. Other German courtiers were very indignant at the clamour raised against them, and where they could venture, spoke and wrote resentfully at the ingratitude shown the King, and the injustice done to them. The result would be that his Majesty would either have to abdicate in favour of the Prince of Wales,

[1] Etough Corresp., II., 60,—*MS.*

or take the reins of Government into his own hands. He was till then but half a King. If the ambition of some designing men threw obstacles in his way he must have time to remove them. In case there should be no possibility of suppressing the factions and of reconciling the different parties by the steps that were taking, there would be nothing left for the King but to propose to resign in favour of the Prince of Wales, and to get his friends abroad to give in to it. The loss of his best English confidant obliged him to put himself entirely into the hands of the present cabal. The Republican Party had of late been very insolent, but when Parliament had gone through their report, means might be taken for putting the King above their insults.[1]

Upon the hearsay evidence of Blunt, whose veracity was not above suspicion, Sunderland was accused of accepting £50,000 in stock, and though he averred that he had lost heavily on the balance of actual purchases and sales, his complicity with Aislabie was widely believed from their being joint Commissioners of the Treasury. Taunts and threats were hurled against him in debate, but specific proof being wanting, the charge of official corruption was negatived on a division by a majority of sixty-one. He was unable, however, to withstand the prevailing outcry, and on condition that Carteret should be made Secretary of State in the room of Craggs, he consented to resign the office of First Lord in favour of Walpole, retaining his place in the Cabinet as Groom of the Stole.

[1] Letter, evidently intercepted, from D.C., one of the Household, to the Marquis de Prier, March, 1721, in the Townshend Papers.—*MS.*

CHAPTER IX.

WALPOLE AT THE TREASURY.

1722.

Reconstruction of the Cabinet—Townshend Secretary of State—Walpole First Lord—Pulteney left out—Carteret Secretary of State—Townshend's Foreign Policy—Excessive rigour—State of the Revenue—Budget of 1721-1722—Tariff Policy of Utrecht Revived—Dissolution—Growth of the Pelham Interest—Walpole's Son a Peer—Bolingbroke's Recall—Jealousy of Carteret—Steele Restored—Death of Sunderland and Marlborough—Suspension of Habeas Corpus—Impeachment of Atterbury.

THE Cabinet had now to be reconstructed. Marlborough still lived and breathed: *stet magni nominis umbra.* But beyond it there was nothing of personal or political power. Sunderland reigned in his stead, and with Stanhope's success abroad and the break-up of the Opposition in Parliament by the return of Townshend, Argyll, and Walpole to office, the durability of the Cabinet seemed to be assured. But, like every succeeding Government, it committed suicide. Sunderland had, indeed, escaped judicial condemnation by his Peers, but neither his pride nor his prudence suffered him to retain his position by the poor majority of three. He had risked power clandestinely to clutch at money—not for its own sake, but to endow the daughter of his young wife with fortune which otherwise he had no chance of compassing; and mortifying as was the notorious fact that he had been pulled through the boiling surge of blame by the combined efforts of colleagues and dependants, he probably never admitted to himself or anyone else that he deserved his fate. Who can measure the pain of such a fall who has not climbed as high; or who can comprehend the confidence with which he looked, not for the first time, to being able to retrieve all that he had lost? Twelve years before he had been flung down the steps of power only to recommence cabals for reascending them;

seven years before he had, to his infinite surprise, been jostled out of Cabinet ascendancy by Townshend, and in a short time he had found means to oust him and take his place. Subsequently, he had the satisfaction of inviting him back to office, moulding the reconstructed Administration pretty much as he would. And now his buoyancy would not drown. He could hold his breath for a time: he had done that before, and with Newcastle, Roxburgh, Kingston, Carteret, and Berkeley, he might still hope to retain, in Marlborough's name and in his own, an influence that resentful rivals could not afford to despise. Carteret's early accession to the Peerage, his early marriage and studious tastes, filled his widowed mother with undoubting faith in his destiny, to play a foremost part in public life. She had herself become, in 1711, co-heiress of the great estates of the first Lord Bath, and being endowed with excellent sense and tact, as well as personal charms, she gradually acquired no little influence in political society. Stanhope especially, and afterwards Sunderland, encouraged their youthful adherent's aspirations; his name had been often mentioned at Hanover by Robethon; and he was commended to the King for the special reason that he could talk to his immigrant Majesty in his own tongue. Carteret had employed his time after leaving Oxford in mastering German, Spanish, and Italian, and perfecting himself in French, and George I. was glad to find that there was one of his insular subjects capable of enjoying and repaying his jokes in German. In July, 1716, Carteret was made Lord-Lieutenant of Devonshire, and in 1719 sent as Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Stockholm. Next year he was named with Lord Polwarth to represent England at the Congress of Brunswick; and he discharged his duties in these capacities so well that, early in 1721, he was named Ambassador to Paris, whither he was preparing to set out when the death of the younger Craggs opened for him the door of the Southern Department. The sudden death of Stanhope and the impending impeachment of Sunderland for complicity in the financial sins of Aislabie, shook the Administration in its pride of place, and prompted them to seek eagerly the renewal of official strength. Walpole was made First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. His Junior Lords were Baillie Edgcumbe, Turner (his colleague at Lynn), and Pelham, brother of the young Duke of Newcastle. Sunder-

land remained Groom of the Stole. Having redistributed his other offices, he felt confident of retaining his primacy in Cabinet and Court. Townshend had filled the Presidency of the Council for the previous twelve months; he now resumed the Seals of Secretary of State; and Carleton was recalled to political life to take his place. Why he had preferred to stand aside in 1714 is not clear. Swift appended to a sketch of him in Burnet,—"Add the quality of avarice and you have the man." But this reproach hardly sticks to one who, having enjoyed Cabinet office, declined to accept £4,000 as a colleague of his former friends. He had obtained from Queen Anne a grant of the curtilage of St. James's Park lying between the gardens of Warwick and Marlborough House, whereon he had begun the spacious mansion which long afterwards bore his name. Whether he found the pleasures of building costlier than he expected, or, like so many others of his quality, wasted part of his fortune in speculation, he yielded now to Sunderland's instances and re-entered the Cabinet.[1] Walpole is said to have objected, that for some years Carleton had seldom voted with the Whigs; that Devonshire was in every way more fitted to fill the position of President; and if he had intimated any wish on the subject it would certainly not have been neglected at a crisis when Government, socially and politically, tottered to its base. Beside his great estates and recognised influence at elections, his personal independence and discretion had won the confidence of Leicester House without alienating that of Kensington. He probably desired, if he did not suggest, the nomination of Carleton, and was content to support out of office any Government that could restore the credit and preserve the integrity of the realm. On Carleton's death, not long afterwards, he became President of the Council, and the mansion and grounds adjoining those of Marlborough House eventually became the residence of Royalty.

In April, Walpole resumed the First Lordship of the Treasury and Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Parker retained the Great Seal, Argyll remained Lord Steward, and Roxburgh Secretary for Scotland. Grafton, the ally of his neighbours in Norfolk, was suffered when he chose to visit Dublin to trifle away time, and temporise vaguely with the Irish Parliament; but for the rest to spend his time at Euston. The Duke of

[1] 25th June, 1721.

Kingston continued to hold the Privy Seal; Lord Cornwallis was made Paymaster-General, while George Treby continued to be Secretary-at-War, and Edward Carteret and Galfridus Walpole became Postmasters-General. Newcastle was Chamberlain, and Berkeley First Lord of the Admiralty, Brodrick still retaining the Great Seal of Ireland.

Walpole welcomed his brother-in-law back to his old office, and resolved to be content with nothing but their joint ascendancy. He frankly said, however, that the Norfolk firm was no longer Townshend and Walpole, but must be henceforth Walpole and Townshend; but while Sunderland preserved his influence at Court and his party in the Cabinet, it would be difficult to resist his unconcealable ambition to rule at the Cockpit once more. Many of those who had followed Walpole in the schism of 1717 were left out. His brother Galfridus had, indeed, been made joint Postmaster-General, and Horace was named Chief Secretary to Grafton in Ireland, and soon afterwards Minister at the Hague; but Pulteney, who, above the rest, deserved and expected advancement, was omitted.

He was highly incensed at the reconstruction of the Government without him. He had played so great a part for several years in Parliament and had given such proofs of his courage as a partisan, and his constancy as a friend, that he could not stomach his being omitted from consultation in a matter of so much interest. When Walpole was impeached in 1711, he had defended him gallantly, and while he lay in the Tower he was frequently his visitor. In the critical days of the Hanoverian accession they two and Stanhope took the lead so prominently as to earn the bantering title of the Grand Allies; and before George I. set foot in England, Pulteney was named Secretary-at-War. In the schism of 1717, he sided with Townshend and resigned. It was natural, therefore, for him to expect that if not consulted in the reconciliation his claims should be considered; and that as he had gone out with his friends he should come back with them. But official politics are a selfish game, and the brothers-in-law, having taken care of themselves, thought he and Charles Stanhope and many more might wait. His own account of it is highly characteristic. Walpole undertook to break the intelligence to him that the quarrel had been patched up between the King and the Prince, and between Sunderland and Towns-

hend. "A bargain," he said, "had been made for those Whigs who had resigned their employments to be put in again by degrees." Pulteney asked who it was that had had the authority to make this bargain. Walpole replied, "I have done it with the Ministry; and it was insisted on that nobody but Lord Townshend should know of the transaction. Neither Lord Cowper, the Speaker, nor anyone else knew it: and therefore we hope that you will not take it amiss that it was kept secret from you. We have not had our own interests alone in view; we have bargained for all our friends; and in due time they will be provided for. I am to be at the head of the Treasury: Lord Sunderland had a great desire to retain the disposition of the Secret Service money; but I would by no means consent to that, knowing the chief power of a Minister (and I presume his profits also) depends on the disposition of it. We know that you do not value anything of that kind; so we have obtained a Peerage for you." Pulteney replied: "If ever I should be mean enough to submit to being sold, I promise you, you shall never have the selling of me. A Peerage is what some time or other I may be glad of accepting for the sake of my family; but I never will obtain it by any base method, or submit to have it got for me on such terms."[1] Townshend's first letter on his reappointment was to M. Fleury, declaring his admiration and respect for one who had been so influential in promoting peace and amity between the two nations; the first foundation of which he deemed the chief happiness of his life to have been instrumental in laying.[2]

Negotiations continued for accommodating differences with Spain. Townshend confirmed William Stanhope in the Embassy at Madrid. He was instructed to temporise discreetly and to say in the name of King George: "I do no longer balance to assure your Majesty of my readiness to satisfy you with regard to your demand touching the restitution of Gibraltar, promising you to make use of the first favourable opportunity to regulate this article with the assent of my Parliament." But for a time the original pledge was kept secret.

In the preceding year reports found their way into print of strong language having been used by the Spanish Ministry on the subject. Stanhope deprecated the renewal of the controversy.

[1] "Remarks on the Craftsman's Vindication of his Two Honourable Patrons."

[2] To the Archbishop of Cambray, 9th February, 1721.—*MS.*

Whatever misunderstandings had arisen from the ambiguous terms of the Treaty of Utrecht regarding English Trade with the Plantations, there could be no doubt of the sincere desire of Spain that "all grievances complained of should be removed."[1] But the consideration which preoccupied the Spanish Court was the promised restoration of Gibraltar, which ought to be settled, and with it all other differences, before the meeting of the Congress of Cambray. No mention need be made of Gibraltar in any Treaty, "since his Catholic Majesty had himself proposed and engaged for keeping the letter from George I. secret." Unqualified assurances were offered that no engagement would be given to the partisans of the Pretender; and for this M. Grimaldo "would not only pawn his life but his salvation." The Jacobites at Madrid were elated on learning the ruin caused by the failure of the South Sea Scheme, and reckoned on the discontent it must occasion; but Stanhope was convinced that their hopes of Spanish assistance were groundless.[2] Nevertheless, new and insurmountable difficulties were started. To the wording of his Majesty's letter in relation to Gibraltar, a copy of which the Ambassador presented to Ministers, they made innumerable objections; that the act of restitution was so darkly mentioned, and what was promised was so faintly expressed, that it really engaged for nothing. The main force was levelled at the word "equivalent," which would put his Catholic Majesty in a much worse condition than he would be in without it; for the acceptance of the letter would show such an earnest desire on his part for the obtaining the fortress as might so encourage the Parliament in extravagant demands, that he should not be surprised if they asked for a province in lieu of it. The Envoy replied that all this should have been thought of before; he was asked to write for such a letter. He was sorely embarrassed by Philip V. declaring that he did not remember to have spoken to him in the interview when the letter was asked for, to the effect he stated; for, though he always contemplated the assent of Parliament being necessary, he never meant to bind himself in stipulations to that effect. Other difficulties arose, until he was told that the Queen believed him to be an enemy to Peace; and, being a soldier himself, that

[1] Wm. Stanhope to Townshend, 17th March, 1721.—*MS.*

[2] To Sec. Carteret, 14th May, 1721.—*MS.*

he would prefer having war. As a last resource, to avoid a rupture, he offered, that if the proposed Treaty for liquidation of damages at sea were signed, he would ask to be furnished with an amended letter from George I., in which the words *sur le pied d'un equivalent* should be omitted; and that the Spanish men-of-war taken off Sicily should be restored. If his Government refused to ratify these concessions, all the rest was to be deemed null and void. The separate Treaty between England and Spain, and the Triple Alliance, including France, were signed early in June. The French Envoy found that he had exceeded his instructions, and wished to retract. Stanhope protested, and was treated with much civility at Court. The amended letter of George I. was sent by Carteret, and duly presented to the Spanish Monarch, who seemed quite satisfied. Orders were sent to restore the Spanish ships of war, then lying at Port Mahon. But nothing was done about Gibraltar.

Russia's encroaching policy gave serious concern to the Cabinet, and one of Townshend's first acts on his return to office was to send instructions to Dayrolle strongly to represent to the Pensionary the consequences that might ensue if the building and equipment of a Muscovite fleet were suffered to proceed in the ports of Holland. "The Dutch had already given way on their part to the entire loss of the balance in the North by suffering the Czar to arrive at that pitch of force and grandeur as to impose upon the poor kingdom of Sweden that miserable fate they were now forced to submit to; and, by this further connivance, they would go on to aggrandise him in those seas where he had no port nor naval strength; not only by opening their ports to him, but by equipping, as it were, a whole fleet for his service. He should sound the Pensionary as to what his thoughts were, and how these practices might be restrained. Dayrolle, however, must take care that whatever be said should be as from himself only, and that he had no instructions from home on this head."[1]

Townshend's views of foreign policy once more turned on the anticipation of hostility from Spain and the development of suspected designs in the Court of Vienna, whereby the Electoral Princes were to be reduced to subordination to its imperious will, and the balance of European power thereby undermined.

[1] Sec. Townshend to Dayrolle, 1st Aug., 1721.—*MS.*

With the aid of France, Sweden, Denmark, and Sardinia, a way might be found of curbing these schemes of ambition, one of the first effects of which, there was reason to believe, would be the repossession of Gibraltar by force of arms.

Sunderland's retention of the post of Groom of the Stole gave him constant access to the King, and opportunity, without provoking observation, of conference with her who in many respects sought to be chief Minister. They had both forgiven Townshend his past thwartings and offences, content with the penalty they had made him suffer. But it was otherwise with Walpole. More than all others, he had contributed to rescue Sunderland's official reputation from the shoals of the South Sea, and whatever the actuating motives may have been, the fact in the eyes of the world was plain and the obligation unendurable. For the selfishness of egotism cannot reconcile itself to the sense of eminent service done, and the haughty Earl tried hard to persuade himself that the sneers and revilings directed against him, notwithstanding his formal acquittal by his Peers, came from the adherents of his successor at the Treasury, if they were not directly instigated by him. It was not long before the Marlborough section of the Cabinet showed that they had not forgotten their old leader, and on questions of minor importance they did not scruple to out-vote their newly-promoted colleague. They were taught to believe that George I. at heart hated Walpole and Townshend, and would be glad to be rid of them once more. Before three months, disunion and distrust had so increased that the Chamberlain, always timid and given to look at the dark side of the picture, wrote to a friend that things were at the worst, without any "rift in the clouds of calamity. Ministers were drove to doing the most cruel barbarities and greatest injustice in the world, or running the risk of bringing the greatest misfortunes on the public. It was a terrible situation for an honest man; but they must yield to the clamour of the times and the necessities of the public. He should not easily forgive those who had brought them into this situation. The only comfort was that there was no ground for the apprehension that the Tories were coming in. The King had declared to him and others the concern the report gave him, and assured them that he was determined to stand by the Whigs and not take in any single Tory. He was very sensible that the Whig Party was the only

security he had to depend on, in which he was most certainly right."[1]

Carteret, who had the entire confidence of Sunderland, sought to persuade Newcastle that there was no one to whom he talked so freely as he did with him, a bold stretch of flattery which he would not have ventured on with anyone who loved himself less than his Grace. He even went the length of saying he was "sometimes uneasy to have no one near to whom he could open his thoughts, for writing did by no means supply this. Still he would let no opportunity slip of acquainting him with what was passing, who was so well acquainted with what Sunderland and he (Carteret) proposed that he would understand hints without much explanation."[2] A week after he wrote assuring the credulous and intriguing Duke that Sunderland was as much his as ever, and that neither of them had lost any ground with the King. When he told his Majesty how matters were agreed, he replied: "*Je veux qu'ils sachent que j'aurai toujours une particulière distinction pour Lord Sunderland et vous.*" Not the least particular of their whole scheme had ever come out. Townshend was certainly sincere in reconciliation, and Walpole made all the appearances possible for a man to make. Charles Stanhope's advancement was put off by Walpole assuring him that it would revive matters in Parliament about the South Sea. This mortified him and Sunderland, but when the First Lord of the Treasury had taken upon him that all South Sea matters should be kept out of the next Session, they could not insist on the point. He wished Charles Stanhope took the matter more patiently than he did, and then he would be less uneasy. It was a blow to him, undoubtedly, but he should never be given up. In politics there was no doing what one would, and at worst, he might be sure of the place in March.[3] Ten days later he wrote that the reconciliation had proceeded from Townshend. "If he could govern Mr. Walpole, all would answer his engagements. The King was resolved that the First Lord should not govern, but it was hard to prevent it."[4]

George I. could not forgive the recent defeat of his hopes of

[1] Newcastle to Mr. Jordan, 18th July, 1721.—*MS.*

[2] From the Cockpit, 17th Aug., 1721.—*MS.*

[3] Carteret to Newcastle. From the Cockpit, 22nd August, 1721.—*MS.*

[4] *Idem.*, from Arlington St.

crippling by statute his successor's prerogative, which he ascribed truly to the energy and determination of Walpole. But neither could he do without money, and, as he often said, Walpole was the only man who could produce a supply of it at will. An extraordinary suggestion was made by the restless Groom of the Stole in order to drive him from the Treasury. It was nothing less than that Walpole should be appointed Postmaster-General for life, which would have disqualified him from sitting in the Lower House, and compelled him to go to the Upper. George I., to the surprise of his prompter, shrewdly asked if he had consented to accept the proposed office, and when answered in the negative, rejoined: "Then I will never force him to take it;" whereupon the strange phantom of jealousy vanished and was heard of no more. The Leader of the Commons was not, in fact, to be lured out of the great position he had regained by compliment or sinecure. He would not have been unwilling that his son should be made a Peer, as he was, in point of fact, somewhat later; but to give up the control and direction of financial affairs for anything that Royalty had to give would have seemed to him absurd.

Meanwhile Sir George Byng was rewarded with the revived title of Torrington for his victory at Syracuse, and was replaced at the Board of Admiralty by Daniel Pulteney; while Bishop Hoadly was promoted from Bangor to Hereford in recognition of his polemical services. "Madame Kilmansegge had worried all mankind about her title, and obtained it all for the sake of peace and quietness." [1]

Under the same date, Sunderland announced that the Bishop of Salisbury had been translated to Durham, the Bishop of Gloucester to that see, and his place filled by Dr. Wilcox; "they had thus nineteen Whig Bishops out of twenty-six, which he thought a pretty reasonable proportion." [2] One of Carteret's first official instructions was to request the Viceroy of Ireland to have sixteen able-bodied Grenadiers, of more than uncommon height, recruited, wherewith George I. wished to make a gratification to his brother-in-law of Prussia, who was known to have an admiration for giants, and was not particular where they were bred. Voltaire tells how he had them from various climes; and

[1] Carteret to Newcastle, September, 1721.
[2] Sunderland to Newcastle.

a specimen from the Isle of the West would be a valued variety. "His Majesty would have conveyance for them by sea from Dublin to Hamburg, where Prussian officers must be ready to receive them."[1] On further deliberation, it was decided that the Celtic Grenadiers should be sent specially to the Queen of Prussia, that she might make a present of them to her husband.

Whatever ills befell other members of the Administration, fortune never seemed to tire of favouring the Chancellor. His judicial reputation gained in strength day by day; lavish hospitality in town and at Sherborne drew around him troops of friends; the metes and bounds of his estates in land were continually changed by the addition of field to field. His rare versatility of speech and tact, rather than grace of manner, made him welcome with the idlers of fashion, women as well as men; and his subservient sagacity in humouring the prejudices of the King made him, in 1721, Viscount Parker and Earl of Macclesfield, with remainder, in default of male issue, in the female line.

The strange freak of paternal animosity which had moved George I. to adopt a proposal that a Bill should be passed severing Hanover from the Crown of England, and declaring that the Prince of Wales should renounce the Electorate before he became King, had the support of some of the Cabinet, though the majority doubted or demurred, but the Chancellor, to the surprise probably of most of them, had strongly recommended that the design should be laid aside as inexpedient. Yet he retained to the last the confidence and regard of his Sovereign. Cowper's jealousy frequently showed itself in the Lords, and led sometimes to altercations with his successor, redounding little to the credit of either, if the imperfect records that remain are to be relied on. But on the whole, the Woolsack was filled with dignity, and, party spirit for a season having lost somewhat of its bitterness, the task of presiding in the Senate was less onerous than formerly.

Sunderland continued to exercise pre-eminent sway, retaining no other office than that of Groom of the Stole. He had prudently surrendered the department of finance to Walpole[2] in consideration of his indispensable aid in stopping the inquiry into his own equivocal conduct in the department; but he kept undisputed control over all others until his death two years later.

[1] To the Lord-Lieutenant, 4th October, 1721.—*MS.*

[2] 3rd April, 1721.

In 1722 Government felt it important to reawaken hope in the Dissenters of the complete removal of their disabilities; and he entered into personal negotiations with Sir John Fryer and other leading men amongst them in the City, with a view of stimulating their more active support at municipal and other elections. A confidential letter from one of their most popular and influential ministers entered unreservedly into details, naming several of the leading merchants and traders whom he wished his lordship to meet. "The two great hindrances of getting so good a Common Council, as cannot but be much desired by the Government in the present juncture, are the strange inactivity of the Whigs in the City and the backwardness of the Dissenters to stand in places where they might be able to carry it. As to the former, I conceive the best way to remove or lessen it would be for your lordship, some evening, to step into the City, and at a proper place to meet some of the chief of those concerned. Twenty good Common Councilmen might be secured that are likely to be lost for want of their acting vigorously. And as to the latter difficulty, I humbly propose that with all convenient speed your lordship would send for Councillor West, K.C., and make use of him, with his father, who is a Dissenter and leading man in the Bridge Ward, but backward to stand himself till such time as the Test is taken off by the Legislature. If your lordship will allow me to wait upon you at the office on Friday evening about the same time as last week I shall then be ready to give you a further account, or if that be not convenient, at any other time or place you may please to appoint."[1] The Groom of the Stole preferred asking Sir J. Fryer and Dr. Calamy to dinner; and he evinced in various ways his readiness to enter into their views; but Walpole doubted the possibility of bringing Parliament to acquiesce in them, and prevailed with the Cabinet to defer the proposal of any further legislative change, while he undertook the impeachment of the Bishop of Rochester for complicity in Jacobite treason.

It is painful to recall the excessive rigour of the Executive, which continued without diminution during this period. A nature so susceptible as Carteret's, with an intellect so enlightened, could not, without compunction, have performed the

[1] Rev. E. Calamy to the Earl of Sunderland, 11th December, 1722, in Waddington's "Congregational History."

duty continually recurring of submitting to Royalty questions of respite from death sentences for strangely divers crimes, and having to set his signature, however perfunctorily, to the stereotyped form in a multitude of cases that the law must take its course.

Many of the legal cruelties inflicted were for offences against property in the agricultural districts, and in the towns of the making or uttering of base coin; and the social superstition that such severeties could not be relaxed with safety to the community retained its hold over jurists and legislators until our own day.

Notwithstanding the paralysis of trade, caused by credulous and extravagant speculations, the National Budget indicated soon a return to equilibrium and a growth of elasticity in the springs of industry. The net income was £9,945,759, of which £5,954,163 was derived from taxation and £2,092,868 from loans and lotteries. The chief items of expenditure were: Army, Navy, and Ordnance, £1,557,153; Civil Government, £1,002,087; interest and cost of public debt, £3,313,986; reduction of debt, £1,627,661 The closing session of the first Septennial Parliament was notable for the first attempt made to reform the tariff. Walpole was not content with the success of his measures to retrieve public credit, damaged by the failure of the South Sea Scheme, but sought to make his mark as a financier by the introduction of a fiscal policy, based on the system of freer if not free trade. Carteret had the merit of carrying commercial treaties between the Baltic States, Great Britain, and Holland in the year preceding, and the new First Lord of the Treasury took the lamp of reform that had fallen from Stanhope's hand and carried it further.

He turned to the best account his predecessor's success by framing and carrying a comprehensive measure for the liberation of commerce and the true encouragement of trade. The preamble deserves to be kept in remembrance. "Whereas the wealth and prosperity of this Kingdom doth very much depend upon the improvement of its manufactures, and the profitable trade carried on by the exportation of the same, and whereas the manufacture of silk stuffs, and of stuffs mixed with silk, is one of the most considerable manufactures of this Kingdom, and their exportation into foreign parts would considerably increase

were it not obstructed and hindered by the high duties payable upon the importation of raw and thrown silk, without allowance being made for the same when wrought up and exported," it was provided that there should be a drawback of the import duty on all such goods exported, and thenceforth all export duty on any product or manufacture of Great Britain should cease and determine, with a few exceptions, and all sorts of drugs used in dyeing should be imported duty free ; duties upon all manner of spice to be greatly reduced, with drawbacks on re-exportation, and with greater effect as regarded home comforts and foreign products. The Cabinet agreed, at his instance, to make the subject the principal topic of the Speech from the Throne in October, and although the faithless record of Parliamentary proceedings omits the specific mention of many of the changes which were accomplished, we know that the import duties on timber for ship and house building, and the products of the whale fisheries were repealed or materially reduced, while duties on the export of manufactured goods were abated in like proportion. The price of timber had risen with the contraction of its supply to an exorbitant figure, while the pine forests of America, though rigorously proscribed by treaty, were rendered unavailable to supply what every year became more and more needful to national prosperity. Bounties on exports had been resorted to in vain. Walpole's remedy was to take off the duties on raw materials brought from the colonies. To stimulate the manufacture of paper, cordage, hats, and various other articles import duties were retained. The whole system of smuggling, which had grown apace under the enhancement of duties for revenue in past years, was cut up in its clandestine profits, and in many cases extinguished; and finding Parliament disposed to listen to his counsel, he went a step, or rather many steps, further, and rendered the export of numerous articles of British manufacture duty free. But from this exemption tin, copper, and lead, and above all, coal produced within the realm, were excepted.

The first Septennial lease of legislative power having come to an end, the thoughts of Government were mainly devoted to procuring a renewal. Few of the counties were contested on what would now be called political grounds. The great families maintained their ascendancy without serious effort, and of these the majority were Whig. But in the main the combined influence

of the clergy and squirearchy sufficed to secure a preponderance to eldest sons or younger brothers of old name among the Tory aristocracy. The close boroughs could only do as they were bidden by their owners on either side, and returned whoever at the last moment they were ordered, without the pretence of regret or satisfaction. But an increasing number of country towns and groups of hamlets were become the skirmishing grounds of ambition, where the fight was sometimes angry, and generally tipsy—not between the comparative few on either side who claimed a right to vote, but between the turbulent non-electors who had come to look upon a dissolution somewhat as schoolboys regard the first chime of the joy-bells for a holiday. Largesse and treating in every form were matters of course, which nobody questioned, as the outward and visible sign of public spirit and gentlemanly bearing; and when the contests ran close (or were said by local agents to be likely to do so) chaises and pairs were certain to enter the place after dark laden with weighty reasons in trunk or valise from headquarters why waverers should brace up their nerves and show independence and love of country at the poll. His Grace of Newcastle's landed property in several counties gave him the nomination of more Members than any of his social equals, and from the matter-of-fact turn of his mind he took to the extension of the power it gave him as the surest means of securing a prominent place at Court, and an influential one in Council. At the General Election of 1722 five Pelhams rejoiced his heart. Sir Philip Yorke and Sir William Gage were returned to his great satisfaction for Seaford. To his surprise Hastings was lost by a single vote; but on the whole Sussex acknowledged his sway, and portions of Notts, Suffolk, and Yorkshire proved faithful. Thus he congratulated himself in being successful in almost all his elections.[1]

The King would have Walpole become a Peer, as all his predecessors at the head of the Treasury had been. But though he loved rank and dignity he loved power more, and his sagacity told him that if he could secure nobility for his children, he could sway more effectually the counsels of his time, and exercise more control over the Upper House itself, by retaining the lead of the Lower. His sister was already a Peeress, and he

[1] To the Duchess, March, 1722.—*MS.*

now advised the King to make his son a Peer under the title of Baron Walpole. In the patent of ennoblement it was set forth that "the beloved and most faithful counsellor of his Majesty chose rather to merit the highest titles than to wear them; the honour due to the father was bestowed upon the son." While thus identified with the nobility, and by his official emoluments enabled to gratify his love of luxury and display, he affected to retain his position as a country gentleman at the head of the Commons. He and Townshend acted together in all things, and step by step they contrived to assert a complete ascendancy in Administration.

In the absence of Sunderland at Hanover, Carteret had become the leader in reversion of the Marlborough section of the Government and the object of the concentrated jealousy and enmity of Townshend and Walpole. Things were in too critical a state to allow of open differences, but by degrees Townshend and Walpole began to depreciate and undermine him. He felt himself so beset with thwartings and intrigues, that, in spite of his command of temper and his confidence in his own ability, he was betrayed into the weakness of telling the Duchess of Kendal that if not decisively supported by the King in foreign affairs he could not endure the responsibility of conducting his portion of them. Her reply may well have recalled him to himself, and reproved his indiscretion in thus owning his weakness to one who he must have known was in confidence with his adversary. She bade him "have patience and all would come right, for his Majesty at heart distrusted his other Ministers."[1] George I. had early trusted Townshend and had learned to relish the coarse jests of Walpole when explained to him in his own tongue, but he hated the didactic and frequently dictatorial tone which he said they assumed on important affairs, and Carteret never put him out of temper.

What none of Steele's beguiling letters to other Ministers would effect was done at Walpole's instance on his accession to power, when the Governor of Drury Lane, after a long period of unjust privation, was restored to the full enjoyment of his patent office. For some years longer Steele's literary energies did not flag, and his last comedy, *The Conscious Lover*, was deemed his best. Walpole, though he cultivated his goodwill

[1] Marchmont Papers, I., 3, on authority of Chesterfield, Aug., 1744.

by affability of talk and occasional acts of hospitality, could never spare from party investment the means of ordinary comfort for Steele's declining days. He worked on to the last with his pen, eschewing controversy in politics or polemics, alike liberal and loyal in his views, chaste and refined in every stroke of humour ; but he was not a sycophant or a Pharisee, and was therefore left to die in something scarce removed from indigence, at less than threescore years.

The rivalry between the First Lord of the Treasury and his unsatisfied predecessor continued without abatement. The Earl was said to have sought allies among the Tories, and Walpole now and then viewed with misgiving the versatility of him who had filled in succession a greater number of offices than any man of his day. But fortune was waiting to be gracious, and an event wholly unexpected was at hand which upset all anticipations of Majesty, Mistresses, and Ministers.

Sunderland expired on the 19th of April, 1722, and his papers were forthwith sealed up by order of the King, containing, as they were known to do, the most secret correspondence with trusted agents of the Government at home and abroad. Marlborough, too feeble to decide for himself in critical circumstances, was induced to demand their surrender on the ground of his near relationship, and on being refused a suit was brought in his name for their recovery, and a decision was pronounced by the Court of Delegates sustaining the rights of Government to retain whatever touched the safety of the State, and ordering that all beside should be surrendered. For some time it became too obvious to those around Marlborough that the rare intellect that had so long outshone all others in administration flickered to its end. For the last time, on the 27th of November, 1721, he attended the House of Lords, and silently interchanged recognitions with some of his old friends. But he took no part and showed no interest in what was going on, and when induced to leave by Cadogan, returned no more. During the spring he was seldom seen in public, and before midsummer was come life had ebbed away, almost without note or pain from him who was beyond compare the most illustrious man of his day.

In Parliament he seldom spoke after the accession of George I., but in the Cabinet, until the schism of 1717, he frequently took part, voting staunchly with his friends and adherents ; but, as

far as can be traced, provoking little, if any, personal enmity, and continuing to perform perfunctorily the many official duties with which he had been charged. Thenceforth his interest in affairs flagged apace, his memory lost perceptibly its hold, and somewhat later his speech grew less clear and impressive. Cadogan was naturally fixed on by Marlborough's friends to succeed him in office. His lieutenant in the field, his confidant in Council, and sharer in most of his designs, he had been steadily advanced in employments and in honours. In 1716 he was made a Peer, next year a Privy Councillor, and the year following an Earl, in recognition of his services in war and diplomacy, and now, being placed at the head of the Army at home, he was appointed Master General of the Ordnance.

The Regent d'Orleans, in an extra fit of friendliness, forwarded intelligence of a new Jacobite scheme of rising and invasion. He assured the Government that it was undermined; that Jesuits in disguise were numerous and busy, and he gave it to be understood that he had been obliged to be peremptory in repelling attempts at making his administration appear to be accessory to their plots. If not really alarmed, the Cabinet resolved to turn the warning to account. The troops in and around London were ordered to remain under arms by night and day, and a camp was formed in Hyde Park.

His grasp of power once firmly gained, Walpole set about strengthening its hold, with cynical indifference to any qualms or scruples supposed to haunt his place. One of his first visits, alone and on foot, was to the Deanery where Atterbury dwelt. From the death of Oxford he had come to be looked upon practically as leader of the Tories in the Lords; and a very astute, ready, and effective leader he made, worth buying, Walpole thought, with any crozier in reversion, and any amount of ready money down that might be agreed upon. Winchester was said to be the special object of the Bishop's desire, and Trelawney was well stricken in years. Government, on the other hand, had strong reasons for suspecting their right reverend critic in debate to be deeply compromised by correspondence with the exiled Family; yet might he not, on liberal terms, be withdrawn from compromising engagements? The Prelate was at home, and the Minister, with bland and easy phrase, opened his proposals. The country needed repose. Recent losses and bewildering specula-

tion had left it heart-sore. After seven years of gloom and chaos, the hopes of exiled Royalty were without form and void. It was his wish to put the most gifted men in the best places of the Church, and therefore, when his old friend Winton died, he should like to set Atterbury in his room. Rochester, even with the Deanery in *commendam*, was no adequate reward for talents and services like his, and until the more fitting See should be vacant, the First Lord would be glad to advise his Majesty to set apart £5,000 a year to balance income and expenditure, if he would only take more care of his health, devote less time to the House of Lords, and let Government feel that they had in him a friend they could depend upon. The Bishop said he needed no excuse for abstention on the ground of health, being half his time locked up at Bromley by the gout, but he would give no promise, and the hard-faced Minister raised the bidding. A near relation might, if he wished, have one of the sinecure Tellerships of the Exchequer usually conferred for Parliamentary service. But all this wheedling was in vain. Upon the stairs he met the relative whom he had designated for the lay preferment, and who was told what luxury for life he had lost. Walpole went his way resolving that if his enemy could not be corrupted he must be crushed.[1] That there were fanatics and featherheads in Jacobite pay who fancied they could organise a plot, there can be no doubt; but Atterbury, who had sagaciously avoided committing himself in personal interviews with those who sought to flatter him into taking the lead, and whose discernment told him that the time had not come for action, showed unqualified surprise when arrested on a Secretary of State's warrant. With intrepid coolness, he parried all interrogatories addressed to him, and with scorn challenged a search for compromising documents among his varied and voluminous papers. But Walpole was on the track of other proof than that which he defied. The Bishop was carried in his own coach to the Tower, where he lay for many months, subjected, as he truly said, to indignity and hardship which had seldom, if ever, been put upon anyone of his age, function, and rank. The arrest of Atterbury was followed by that of the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Orrery. Whatever grounds existed for suspicion, persons of consequence would not have been arrested without the prompting of a so-called confi-

[1] Atterbury Papers in Williams's Memoirs, I., 377.

dential letter from Lord Mar, to whom, after his narrow escape from Scotland in 1715, unwary survivors of a lost cause were tempted to write from time to time. How many of these epistles were furtively transmitted to Whitehall we can never know. Stanhope, if he had them, never used them: Walpole regarded them as the jewels in the snake's head, and used them daintily. Of bloodshed on the scaffold there had been enough; at least, so thought George I., and if a Government was to be stable without expensive garrisons and armaments, the sentiment of pity and disgust must not be revived even in the unprivileged multitude, as in the days of Tudor and Stuart. A few months' confinement in a grim old keep, encompassed with so many recollections, might be trusted to cool the malcontent spirit of unadventurous nobles, and ill-paid agents of James III., if only somebody of distinction, compromised or believably compromised, were made an example. Atterbury stood out pre-eminently fitted for the purpose. The clergy throughout London put up prayers for his deliverance, and from their pulpits exhorted their flocks to protest against his captivity. Ministers were daily reminded of the fate of their predecessors who had ventured to lay violent hands on priests and prelates whom the people loved: the imprisonment of the seven Bishops had ruined Sunderland's father, and the prosecution of Sacheverell had precipitated Godolphin's fall. But times were changed; and though portraits of Atterbury looking through his barred window in the Tower were to be seen in every shop, and no end of diatribes and pasquinades appeared from week to week denouncing his detention without trial, the Cabinet remained obdurate and silent. Lord Falkland warned the Pretender from Paris that he was betrayed by Mar to Walpole. On consulting Atterbury regarding his suspicion, he would only say that a pension of £3,000 a-year was seldom paid without some essential service being rendered for it. The Ministry could not be so well informed as they were by any but one who was let into the most secret councils of the exiled Court.[1]

Both Houses of the Legislature voted Addresses on the wicked designs said to be hatching against the Dynasty; and a Bill suspending *Habeas Corpus* for a year was carried in the Lords

[1] Letters from Viscount Falkland and Hon. James Murray to James III., proving in detail Mar's treachery.

through all its stages, by three to one, on the same day. It was the first time that so long a suspension of the writ had been voted since the Revolution. The House of Commons would, no doubt, do the like, and "these proceedings would show the world how little the disaffected had to depend upon."[1] A fortnight later a message from the King asked the assent of the Upper House to the arrest of the Duke of Norfolk, as chief of the Catholic nobility, for high treason, which, though resisted by eight-and-twenty Peers as needless and of evil precedent in a Constitutional sense, was carried by double that number.

Walpole began in 1722 to build himself a mansion fitted to his possession of power. The old house at Houghton was pulled down, and the foundations laid down of the imposing structure where his latter days were passed. The building was not finished till 1735, when it contained a collection of statuary and painting seldom equalled at the time. When he laid the foundation stone George I. was said to have given him, unasked, £10,000.

By the death of Stanhope and the resignation of Sunderland, the stability of the Anglo-French Alliance seemed to be endangered. Du Bois had no intimacy with Townshend and Walpole, and little confidence in their diplomatic delegate, Sir R. Lutton. He knew that the English Cabinet was divided, and understood that Carteret took the lead in the section unexpectedly deprived of its powerful head and efficient hand; but, until the arrival of M. Schaub, with confidential instructions, he could not assure the Regent what course the British Government would pursue, or which of the two Secretaries of Embassy would prove the stronger. The Marquise de Villette, daughter of Madame de Maintenon, whom Bolingbroke had married, was sent to procure his pardon; and Harcourt agreed to advocate his petition. Townshend and Walpole were for a time importuned unavailingly. They knew too well the danger of letting such a man again resume his place in the Lords, and upon no condition would they incur the risk of being bearded and ridiculed by him. Harcourt gradually discerned that the Monarch was less apprehensive than his Ministers of the possible consequences of Bolingbroke's restoration. In point of fact, the danger was to the Cabinet, rather than to the Dynasty; for

[1] Townshend to Dayrolle, 12th October, 1722.—*MS.* in B. M.

Bolingbroke had quarrelled beyond reconciliation with the Pretender, and his ambition was now set upon becoming a Minister of the House of Hanover. The ex-Chancellor, finding he could make no way for his friend with the brothers-in-law, introduced Madame de Villette to the Duchess of Kendal, who was not equally indisposed to entertain the question of the eloquent exile's recall; and whose sympathy in his case was quickened into activity by an anonymous present of several thousand pounds. George I. intimated his readiness to grant the pardon. Warm debate thereupon arose at the Cockpit, Walpole strenuously resisting his readmission to the Senate, where he would, ere long, infallibly become the head of an Opposition, menacing the stability of a Whig Government: for he was one whom no promises could bind, and no obligations keep from mischief. Harcourt, seeing that he could not obtain all that he desired, suggested, as a compromise, that Bolingbroke's attainder should be reversed, and that he should be restored in blood, whereby he would be enabled to enjoy the rights of citizenship, while his legislative privileges as a Member of the Upper House were excepted. The exile was willing to avail himself of the concessions thus made; confidently believing that, once in England, he should, ere long, obtain the rest.

Both Houses were occupied during the spring of 1723 with inquiries into the conspiracy of the previous year, in which a Committee of the Commons reported that Lord Orrery and the Bishop of Rochester were deeply implicated. Layer had, in prison, confessed his share in the plot; and a subordinate agent named Neynoe did likewise. The Committee, with Walpole for Chairman and Poyntz for Secretary, visited the Tower day by day to examine these and other witnesses; six warders, armed to the teeth, keeping guard at the door.[1] They finally reported that there was evidence of the Prelate's complicity. Yonge, on behalf of the Government, moved for leave to bring in a Bill of Attainder, as the only means of reaching so great an offender. His guilt was aggravated, he said, by the repeated oaths of loyalty he had taken in his sacred office; whereby, as he had rendered himself a disgrace to his order, Parliament was justified in saying: "Let his habitation be desolate; and his Bishopric let another take." Wyndham, Bromley, Shippen, and

[1] Mist's *Journal*, 26th Jan., 1723.

Hungerford objected to such a mode of proceeding on hearsay evidence, but they did not venture to divide.

Proceeding by attainder instead of impeachment, which would have necessarily involved a trial by his Peers, and the proof of guilt according to the rules of law, was strongly objected to in the Upper House as a deviation from the established practice in cases of treason, for which no better precedent could be cited than that pursued in the case of Sir John Fenwick Walpole, however, persuaded the Cabinet to disregard all considerations as resting on constitutional grounds by laying before them confidentially letters which his agents at Rome had, by lavish bribery, obtained leave to abstract from the Cabinet of the Chevalier, without which evidence legal conviction could not be secured; proceeding by attainder was, therefore, substituted for impeachment. Reasons of State were hinted or whispered why Government should not disclose all they knew; and *Habeas Corpus* being suspended, the spiritual lord of Rochester lay in prison during the winter and spring.

An order was sent to Colonel Williamson, the Deputy-Lieutenant in charge to seize their prisoner when alone and examine his person, his bureau, and his wardrobe, of which he complained to his Peers indignantly. Relying on a standing order of the Lords which forbade any of their Members pleading against them in the Commons, Atterbury wrote to the Speaker declining to give him any trouble, as he must make his defence in the assembly of which he had the honour to be a member. A majority of the Upper House, moved by Ministers, offered to relieve his scruples, but he was too sagacious to incur liability to a double trial. Five days were spent in speeches for the Bill, the reading of alleged copies of letters said to be written and received by the accused, none of them authenticated save at second hand by agents of Mar, who had been bought over by Walpole.

The chief witness relied on was Neynoe, a clerk in Holy Orders, who, forsaking the ways of his youth, had given himself up to the trade of a spy. On the eve of the trial he was found drowned; but his depositions were used notwithstanding. Even in the agony of his peril, Atterbury could not still the sense of sardonic humour at the mockery of evidence. "A Right Honourable person hears Neynoe say, that he heard Kelly say, what he must have heard persons of greater figure say, what they had

heard the Pretender say concerning the Bishop of Rochester. And by this chain of hearsays, thus deduced, I am proved to be a sort of First Minister to the Pretender." Walpole, however, would not let go the ghost of the spy, whom he had paid in cash; and unconfronted and uncross-examined he was made to tell his tale of treason. How Macclesfield could have retained his seat on the Woolsack, in obedience to his official maker and master, his biographer does not explain. The days of his own trouble were not far off when he too should be put in jeopardy, and when his cry for help to that pitiless master would be in vain.

Atterbury, who recognised in Walpole his greatest enemy, exhausted every device of subtle logic and sarcasm to confuse him in cross-examination. He had never before probably met his match, and he is said to have been sanguine that he should have damaged if not discomfited his accuser. But Walpole was not to be disconcerted or driven to admit anything he did not choose to own, and in the judgment of those who witnessed the rare intellectual wrestle, the case at the end of it was left where it had been before.

Community of dislike to the Administration, though springing from different causes, had frequently brought the Jacobite Bishop and the Whig ex-Chancellor together, and a certain friendship had grown up between them. When the Bill of Attainder against Atterbury came before the Peers, Cowper made an intrepid stand against it. The Prelate's disaffection was notorious, and to take his part was a thankless and unpopular task. But in whatever other qualities Cowper may have been deficient, he never showed any lack of courage or fear of odds, and history has long since confirmed the truth and wisdom of the burning words in which he denounced the substitution of a Bill framed by party leaders and carried by party votes for judicial proceedings and legal proofs. "I am, my Lords, against this Bill, not only because I think nothing has been offered sufficient for the support of it, but because I think the honour and dignity of the Crown, of this House, and of the House of Commons are concerned. The other House began by voting the Bishop guilty without hearing him, and then instead of impeaching him, or leaving him to the ordinary course of law, they make themselves his judges as well as his accusers, and pass sentence of condemnation upon him. Your Lordships' privileges are in-

vaded, for in you is vested the supreme judicial power. The alleged culprit stands at your bar, and has never attempted to fly. If there be legal evidence against him, let him be legally convicted; without legal evidence he must be wrongfully condemned. If this Bill should pass, it would become a dangerous precedent. My zeal for the good of my country obliges me to set my face against oppression, whether by five hundred men or by one; for vain will be the boast of the excellency of our Constitution, in vain shall we talk of our liberty and our property secured to us by law, if, when it suits the purpose of a majority in Parliament, without law or evidence, we may be deprived of both." Gastrell, Bishop of Chester, boldly argued that the case against Atterbury was not proven, as did Gibson of Lincoln, but the rest of his brethren condemned him. With marvellous subtlety he weighed every shred and feather of the imputations heaped up against him, until the world without began to murmur shame, and pending votes to waver. The Bill stood over for deliberation, and on the 23rd May a meeting of the Cabinet took place to consider what should be done. The attainder passed, Atterbury was deprived of his see and exiled for life. At Calais he met Bolingbroke on his way home, who could not forbear exclaiming, "We are exchanged." In despair he was induced to take up the official garb in the Pretender's Court that Bolingbroke had laid down, and for some years his singular versatility of thought and style were devoted to the ill-requited toils of diplomacy in a hopeless cause.

When the measure for taxing Catholics was embodied in a Government Bill, its provisions were extended to all non-jurors. The impossibility of defining who came under the description suggested naturally manifold objections, and when they finally became law widespread fears of penalty begat a disposition to preventive swearing in classes high and low, that soon resulted in a practice of pitiable perjury, or, to say the least of it, of scandalous trifling with the obligation of an oath. In the Lords considerable resistance was offered, the Bill being committed by a majority of fifteen only. On the third reading it was denounced as persecution by Lords Strafford, Bathurst, Bingley, and Trevor, and excused as mild in comparison with former penal laws by Townshend, Carteret, Cadogan, Bishop Hoadly, Newcastle, and Macclesfield. For the last time Cowper raised his voice in favour

of religious liberty. Whatever gloss might be put upon the measure, it was and would be held to be persecution more than usually ill-timed, when the Governments of France and Spain, who had proved themselves loyal allies were said to be interceding for their co-religionists in Great Britain. Experience warned them of the fatuity and error of the policy towards Protestants once pursued in those countries, and which had resulted only in driving into exile many of the best and most industrious of their people. Were they about to force peaceable and useful citizens from amongst them by like ill-usage? But he spoke in vain. The Cabinet was content to accomplish its purpose by sixty-nine to fifty-five votes, proxies included.[1] There being nothing any longer to require the presence of the Court in England, George I. once more visited his Electoral dominions soon after midsummer, accompanied by the two Secretaries of State, where for a time their thoughts were chiefly given to concerting measures with the Government of the United Provinces to frustrate the intentions of the Emperor regarding the formation of the East India Company at Ostend in rivalry to those existing at London and Amsterdam.[2]

Neither of the jealous Secretaries of State would trust the other alone in the dark. At Hanover Townshend had had bitter experience of what a colleague might do for the advancement of his interests under the name of friendship, and Carteret, who was the legatee of all Sunderland's secrets, knew too well what he might expect from one so thoroughly skilled in the art of traversing a colleague's purpose in diplomacy. It was agreed that during their absence from London Walpole should exercise all the functions of Secretary of State, in addition to those of First and Second Lord of the Treasury.[3] Horace Walpole was sent on a special mission to Paris, not to supersede Schaub but, if possible, to become more important. And this was against the wish of Carteret, who vainly strove to maintain a counterbalance in the Cabinet for the residue of Sunderland's friends. An attempt was made to remove Cadogan from the command of the Guards with a view to promote Lord Cobham, but when this failed Cadogan believed himself secure, and, with-

[1] 22nd May, 1722.
[2] Townshend to Dayrolle, 2nd July, 1723.—*MS.*
[3] Etough, II., 75.—*MS.*

out permission of the King, issued general orders as Commander-in-Chief, to which Walpole took exception, as implying a degree of authority approaching that which Marlborough had exercised ; and of which he was to the last peculiarly jealous. The precise difference it practically involved was not very easy to define, but in the rivalry of parties in the Cabinet it was thought worth while alarming his Majesty's susceptibility and thereby obtaining a palpable proof of diminished confidence and favour. Carteret was obliged on the 18th of June to tell Cadogan in an official dispatch that the King had taken great exception to the style used in the order of the 30th of May, of "Commander-in-Chief." His Majesty said he would have mentioned it to him if he had seen him the day before he left England. He did not intend to diminish any trust, rank, or authority which his Lordship had, that he should still have the same inspection and direction of Troops of Horse and Grenadiers as he had of the other regiments, and that he should act under the Lords Justices, of whom he was one. But the order of the 30th of May had a tendency towards appointing a Captain-General, and therefore he had ordered Mr. Walpole to signify his pleasure that it should be revoked.[1] It did not suit the wary purpose of the First Lord of the Treasury orally to snub his brother Regent, or to have the indignity put upon him by Townshend. It was therefore decided that it should come from Cadogan's friend and ally by Royal command. Cadogan was nettled at the revocation of the order he had received leaving him only a discretionary control over the Foot and Horse Guards. He tried to make it subsequently appear that he had still the power which the Cabinet insisted upon limiting. The First Lord thought it necessary to keep a firm hand over Cadogan, for he tried by all possible ways to make the world imagine that he had got the better of the affair.[2]

[1] Carteret to Cadogan, from Hanover, 18th June, 1723.—*MS.*

[2] 28th June and 18th July, 1723, to Townshend.—*MS.*

CHAPTER X.

CARTERET DIPLOMATIST AND VICEROY.

1724—26.

Keeps friends with Midleton—Commandership of the Forces—Council of Regency—Death of Cowper—Encroachments of Newcastle—Indictment of the Drapier—Harcourt joins the Ministry—Resignation of Midleton—Wood's Patent Cancelled—Carteret and Swift—The Dean in England—Local Additions to Irish Privy Council—Malt Tax in Scotland—Suppression of Secretaryship for Scotland—Charges against Macclesfield—Sir Peter King Chancellor—Order of the Bath Revived—Pardon of Bolingbroke—The Court at Hanover.

THE Council of Regency frequently acted as the Consultative Executive instead of the Cabinet, avoiding questions of a party nature. They were not always fortunate in unanimity. The temper of his Royal Highness was not very good, and he talked more of Opposition than he used to do. M. Schreyenberg, the private Secretary at Gohrdt, requested Walpole to let him know from time to time, in confidence, what went on: from which Newcastle thought they would not get much comfort.

Carteret, being conscious that his colleague was acquiring an ascendant influence over the mind of the King, through the Duchess of Kendal, sought the aid of Madame de Platen, with a view to countervail it, and instructed Sir L. Schaub at Paris to promote the views of the Count de Florentine, on which depended his marriage with her daughter. Townshend was disposed to treat with indifference what probably seemed to him so visionary a scheme; but Walpole, well informed by his brother Horace, persuaded him of its reality; and the practical result in his mind was to wean the Swiss over to their side betimes, who seemed, in truth, quite open to conviction as to where his personal interests lay.

While at Hanover, Carteret was induced by Lady Darlington to enter into a strange scheme of hers for marrying her daughter by the King to Count St. Florentine, on whom it was suggested by Bernsdorff that the Regent might be persuaded to confer the dignity of a dukedom. Townshend wrote angrily to Walpole on the want of candour towards himself and the want of discretion towards the King in thus luring him into a demand which the head of the French Government was likely to resent or contemn. But Walpole, who was beginning to relish errors of judgment on the part of a colleague which might form in due time grounds for getting rid of him, was not so easily persuaded of the futility of Mde. de Platen's ambitious manœuvres, and thus a foolish project which might, with candour on both sides, have been harmlessly laid to rest, was allowed to go on until it had wrought distrust and enmity inappeasable. Newcastle easily fell in with Walpole's views. He only hoped that Townshend took care to "do everything by the advice and with the approbation of their 'great friend' (the Duchess), whose credit, as well as good intentions, must be superior to everybody's, male or female; and he dreaded the tenderness sometimes shown for the Countess."[1]

Lady Darlington, on her part, was glad to make use of the friendship of the Earl to promote her maternal views in Paris. If she could not herself be a Duchess, she hoped to see her daughter endued with that dignity in the French Court. Amelia wanting an outfit and trousseau, how was it to be provided? The jealousies that rankled in the hearts of the rival mistresses do not seem to have poisoned the youthful lives of their offspring; and it was suggested, no doubt by Carteret, that Lady Walsingham might befriend her half-sister by advancing the necessary sum, keeping for once her despotic mother in the dark. The newly-made Peeress was easily engaged in a little plot which had in it the combined attractions of generosity and mystery, and the curious relations of George I. to those who surrounded him are revealed in a confidential despatch from the Secretary of State to the First Lord of the Treasury:—

"I am writing to let you know that I have received his Majesty's commands to draw a bill on the Treasury for £500,

[1] To Walpole, 31st August, 1723.—*MS.*

and another bill for the like sum a post or two hence, for a service, which it is his Majesty's pleasure should remain an entire secret, and which I may beg of you to keep as such, from the Duchess of Kendal. I make no doubt but this reservedness towards her Grace, to whom we have sworn an eternal and inviolable attachment, will at first surprise you not a little; but your astonishment will cease when I acquaint you that the share I have had in this affair has been in obedience to the Countess of Walsingham, whose conduct toward us has been such as gratitude eternally engages us to assist her, wheresoever she is concerned, either personally or in favour of any of her friends. The person to whom the King has given this bounty is her own sister (Mde. de Platen), of whom I shall say no more than that, had you the happiness of being known to her, you would wish the King had given her ten times as much. This little infidelity I can, with great truth, assure you is the only one I have been or shall be guilty of towards the Duchess during my stay here. However, I must recommend to you in the strictest manner the keeping this transaction perfectly secret, as I am resolved to do on my part."[1]

Carteret for a time held his ground, aided by Bernsdorff and Bothmar; and the brothers-in-law deemed it necessary, we are told, to meet intrigue by intrigue, and manœuvre by manœuvre, to secure the good offices of the Duchess. Townshend worked upon her jealousy of Carteret's endeavour to gratify her rival. In the end, he was out-manœuvred, and his plenipotentiary at Paris, Sir Luke Schaub, was superseded to make room for Horace Walpole. Lord Harcourt tried in vain to compass the recall of Bolingbroke, until a sum of £11,000 had been paid by the exiled statesman to the female Minister: then, and not till then, Townshend agreed, and Walpole undertook to obtain a reversal of the act of attainder. The Duchess of Kendal enjoyed a pension of £7,500 a-year during the life-time of the King, besides many perquisites and presents which those who wished to rise at Court were fain to offer.

The Court wanting money during the autumn, the First Lord of the Treasury undertook to find £150,000, as the utmost he could do just then; but so arranged, as he acquainted Townshend, that both his Majesty and Lord Carteret should

[1] October 25th, 1723.—*MS.*

see that he lacked nothing that could contribute to the comfort and convenience of Royalty. Not the less varied and assiduous were the arts whereby he endeavoured to keep other influences on his side at Hanover. Neither he nor Townshend trusted to mere flattery in their dealings with the ruling favourite. "Our good Duchess, I believe," wrote the latter, "reposes a more entire confidence in me than in any other person about the King;" and the sagacious relatives needed not reminding that such a woman valued more than aught else being treated with what she believed to be unreserved and pre-eminent confidence.[1]

Despite his jealousy of his colleagues, Townshend wished to have the command of additional finances in order to support the King's favourite candidate for the Crown of Sweden; and even Newcastle, while full of fears that the extra charge on the estimates would furnish a handle to Opposition, thought it was highly politic, even by a sacrifice of financial ease, to engage, if possible, the Courts of Berlin, Stockholm, and Copenhagen, in resistance to the dangerous ambition of the Czar. Carteret's diplomatic success in Sweden, and his rare knowledge of German interests and ideas, justified his taking the lead in the affair; and while Dubois lived he believed France would not be scared into hostility to the Baltic League. In the Cabinet his supporters were Roxburgh, Carleton, Cadogan, and occasionally the Chancellor. But the sons of Zeriah were too strong for him; and as his temperament would not own a superior, and Walpole would not endure a questioner of his ascendancy, it was inevitable that they should part. There was at all times about Carteret a self-confident indifference to danger which made him often seem to invite difficulty he might have avoided. His persistent instigation of Sir Luke Schaub to press for the elevation of St. Florentine against the repugnance of the Regent, and the open protest of the old French nobles, led Townshend at length to instruct Horace Walpole at Paris to disown and discourage the unwise demand. Instead of taking issue at once at such an encroachment on his privileges as Southern Secretary of State, Carteret prompted Schaub to *finesse* with his unwelcome coadjutor, and to urge the paternal wishes of George I. more strongly than ever. Sir Luke's maladroit attempt to carry out his instructions drew an indignant re-

[1] To Walpole, Hanover, October, 1723.—*MS.*

buke from the Regent, and abruptly put an end to this project. Schaub was discredited, and Townshend insisted on his recall; Horace Walpole eventually being named in his room, the baffled Minister saw that his influence with the King must yield to the predominant sway of his rivals in Council, and he prepared himself for the change of offices that took place on their return to England.

Amid all the competing schemes of the day and restless disposition of Continental Courts, Walpole kept his head clear in favour of permanent peace with France and Russia, caring little what became of the rest of the world. "His politics were in a narrow compass: if he kept perfectly well with the Regent and the Czar, he was under no apprehension of foreign disturbances."[1] He took care to keep Newcastle filled with his own notions, and in doing so took infinite trouble to keep up the semblance of consultation and conference with him on all points of importance, pretending every now and then to agree with his Grace, not only transmitting him despatches from abroad, from day to day, when he was in the country, but, upon ordinary occasions, copies of his own replies to Hanover, except when excessive pressure left him no time, and that generally happened when he was determined to take his own way. The Duke was delighted with the importance thus given him, and doubtless believed that he was reciprocating confidence of vital moment by expounding, in diluted logic, the reason for a policy in which he probably believed that he had of his own free judgment concurred. Walpole told him he grew quite proud of his own way of reasoning when he found it was so agreeable to his Grace's thoughts. Could Lord Townshend see his last letter he would never believe that they did not compare notes.[2]

Newcastle was in raptures at the dexterity shown by Townshend in the intrigue for the removal of Carteret, whose influence at the French Court had been undermined by Horace Walpole. Upon Townshend suggesting that it would facilitate H. Walpole's mission if he had full credentials at Paris, and saying that the admission of the King of Portugal into the Quadruple Alliance furnished a reason, his Majesty immediately fell in with the

[1] To Newcastle, 31st August, 1723.—*MS.*

[2] To Newcastle, enclosing important despatches from Hanover, 6th September, 1723.—*MS.*

proposal, and promised to state it next day to Carteret as his own thought, which he did, and gave his Lordship positive orders to send on to England at once for the proper instruments for that purpose. "This indisputable mark of the King's favour towards us and neglect of Carteret and Schaub must induce the Duc d'Orleans and the French Ministers to open themselves towards one another and to court our friendship. Putting so near a relation of ours over Schaub's head at a Court where the whole scene of affairs centre in Carteret's province and in the strength and heart of his interest, is a publication to the world of the superiority of our credit. I make no doubt but that the accounts the King has received of the boasts of our adversaries have contributed to the drawing down of the mortifying stroke on their heads, which I can assure you has so astonished Lord Carteret that I have never observed in him on any occasion such visible marks of despair."[1]

Lord Cowper died at his seat in Hertfordshire on the 10th of October, and thus relieved Ministers from the last of those whose criticism they had cause to fear in the House of Lords. Within a brief space Shrewsbury, Oxford, Sunderland, and Atterbury had all been swept from their path. It only remained to get rid of the presence of Carteret and Macclesfield, who dared now and then in Cabinet to exercise the right of private judgment.

Newcastle was at this period in training for the business of his future life—that of monopolist of patronage. For this he had begun to mend old Parliamentary nets and to make new ones—expensive work, entailing endless labour and outlay. The number of Pelhams in the Parliament of 1722 was not *et nomine* greater than that of 1715, when he was no more than a 'prentice hand in corruption. But seven years of official knowledge had made him an accomplished artificer in the work of sapping and mining the judgment of Parliament, and reducing what was left of the free will of Monarchy to absolute submission to administrative captivity. He had now half a score of seats at his disposal in the Commons, and he had set his heart upon having as many on the Bench of Bishops.

The sudden death of the Regent of France was looked upon by Walpole as the first serious turn of ill luck they had had.

[1] Townshend to Walpole, 25th October, 1723.—*MS.*

The Duc de Bourbon became his successor; but the English Embassy already knew the worth of M. Fleury, although as yet he had attained no Ministerial place at the Court of the precocious King. George I. was too happy in his old home at Herrenhausen to be easily coaxed back to Kensington, and Ministers grew uneasy at the prospect of meeting Parliament without him. Immigrant Monarchy had not yet struck root deep enough to dispense with State ceremonies; and Townsend tried what could be done in the way of influencing the Royal mind by apt quotations from the almanac as to the changes of the moon up to Christmas, which might indicate a safe passage across the troubled Channel that surged between his ancestral and adopted dominions, with shrewd calculations as to unruly blasts in mid-winter, which might make the transit difficult. Still more to the purpose were financial considerations: "The supplies (which were granted only from Christmas to Christmas) being exhausted, every branch of the public Service must be at a stand. Parliament would meet probably in ill temper, and the Session must unavoidably be protracted into the summer months." But if they were sure that the King would return by the middle of December the two Houses might be prorogued to the 10th of January.[1]

In France, in the early days of Louis XV., justice between man and man revived the peaceful energies of trade, and gave fresh life to credit and to commerce. Every thought of the wise Abbé was imparted on these subjects to the English Resident at Paris and by him reported, with appreciative comment, to his brother, to whom such notions of government were more and more welcome. Both contemned religious persecution and detested foreign war, and under their respective influence the two kingdoms during the next decade recovered much of what they had lost by previous misrule. The influence exercised in French affairs by Fleury excited the envy of the fanatical party so much that they had contrived to have him honourably banished from Court by getting him appointed, without his consent, to a distant diocese. He is said to have subscribed himself the first time he was canonically obliged to do so—"Claude, by Divine indignation, Bishop of Frejus." But his enemies relaxed their watchfulness at Rome; and pleading humbly that his previous training fitted

[1] Townshend to the King, 30th November, 1723.—*MS.*

him less for episcopal than other services to the Church, he obtained leave to devolve the dignities and duties of the Crozier on one more qualified to keep parish priests and country curates in diocesan discipline, and he became instead capitular head of a subordinate community at Tournay, which enabled him once more to spend his time at Paris.

How much the Cabinet were at their ease after Cowper's death and the decision to supersede Carteret as Secretary of State had been come to, was significantly indicated by the brevity and tameness of the Session. Unanimity was, in fact, only broken by a sharp but abortive resistance in the Commons to keeping up the land forces to 18,000 men in a year of anticipated peace. Morpeth, Jekyll, and Verney combined with Bromley, Shippen, and Hungerford to oppose the unnecessary expense, while Henry Pelham, Pulteney, Treby, Dodington, Yonge, and Brodrick sustained the vote, and were severally rewarded according to their words. In the Lords the contention was again raised on the Mutiny Bill, the recent rigour of which, it was argued, would never have been sanctioned, save in a time of impending war, and which ought not to be petrified into precedent. Trevor, Wharton, and Strafford reasoned with little effect against the obvious tendency to render a large military establishment an essential part of the Executive Government, while Harcourt and Argyll, who had become identified with the administration of Walpole, supported Townshend, rebuking such misgivings.

The complete understanding on questions of Foreign policy cemented by the tact and skill of Horace Walpole and Fleury (daily becoming more influential in the Councils of France), left Townshend little to trouble him; and encouraged George I. to spend more than half the year in Hanover. Domestic administration was confided to Newcastle, as Secretary for the Northern Department, while his brother Henry Pelham ousted Treby from the office of Secretary-at-War, and Cadogan was deprived of the Command of the Army. Carteret was obliged to relinquish the post he was pre-eminently fitted to fill, and to put up with banishmeut to Ireland, while Grafton, to console him for his recall, was given the Gold Key theretofore held by Newcastle. Treby was compensated with a Tellership of the Exchequer; Yorke was made Attorney-General; George Townshend, Com-

missioner of Excise; Yonge and Dodington, Lords of the Treasury. In a letter to Grafton, marked private and secret, Townshend apologised for his Grace's omission in the consultations that had led to the changes of office, and tried to persuade him that his interests and feelings had duly been cared for as he must recognise in the great dignity of Chamberlain being conferred upon him, for his friends in the Cabinet had always considered his interests identical with their own.[1] Newcastle exulted in the reward of his nine years' diligent apprenticeship to official routine, and entered on that memorable sojourn in the wilderness of blunder which lasted nearly forty years. But his manner of recalling the superseded Viceroy[2] was so needlessly abrupt as to cause the latter no little pain, and he earnestly besought his Grace that the public notification might be so framed as to deprive his enemies of any temptation to triumph over him.[3] The error was at once set right, and an order was given that the patent appointing Carteret Lord-Lieutentant should be stopped until after his predecessor's return to England.[4] A profusion of apology accompanied the reparation of form.

For some months Carteret corresponded privately with both parties in Ireland. With all the arts of which he was a master, his aim was to conciliate their personal goodwill before undertaking his difficult task. By help of the Post Office, or private treachery, what bore the appearance of double dealing became known to Walpole, and confirmed more than ever his suspicions and dislike. At length he made up his mind very characteristically to force the lingering Viceroy to declare himself on the question that kept Ireland at fever heat. "The only thing that could be done was the sending over Lord Carteret himself immediately, and he should not be for sending him over now, if he did not think it would end in speedily recalling him. They would at least get rid of him in England, and when he was upon the spot he would be forced to explain himself, and take his party betwixt the two great men there, which he (Walpole) was confident he managed now by lying to both. He would be under a necessity of either helping them through in this affair

[1] 1st April, 1724.—*MS.*
[2] Newcastle to Grafton, 14th April, 1724.—*MS.*
[3] Grafton to Newcastle, 17th April, 1724.—*MS.*
[4] Newcastle to Grafton, 20th April, 1724.—*MS.*

(which would be impossible for him to think of after the part he had already acted) or of losing himself with the King when he should see that he fell entirely into the Irish politics and the independency that was so much aimed at."[1] Contrary to his wishes, Carteret was sent to Ireland to quell the disturbance he was said to have fomented, but which he really had no interest whatever in fanning into flame. Newcastle thought he would find pacification no easy task; but if he must go into exile during half the year he was resolved to show from the first in whom he placed confidence. Ere his patent was signed, he promised St. John Brodrick and Henry Boyle that they should be members of the Irish Privy Council, and he sent assurances to Midleton of the regard and friendship he entertained for him. All the more he desired, however, to dispel the imputation that he had been stimulating discontent with the existing order of things, and encouraging extravagant fears respecting the coinage. On the day of his arrival in Dublin the Fourth of the Drapier's Letters was brought to his notice as dangerously exceeding in violence of language all that had gone before, and fomenting national jealousy on other important subjects. As soon as he had been sworn in, he addressed the Council in the usual terms of official compliment spiced with caustic references to the pamphlet tending to excite sedition. The Chancellor condemned the doctrines promulgated. The King was spoken of in an undutiful and unfitting manner. The writer asserted broadly the past autonomy of Ireland, which he represented as in a state of slavery, kept down merely by force:[2] and the Attorney-General was directed to prosecute the publisher. Some of the Council feared the proceeding might fail; but it was resolved to offer a reward of £300 for the discovery of the author. Archbishop King, Bishop Bolton, and Dr. Coghill declined to sign the order. The two former were known to be intimate with Swift, who by general consent was believed to be him who troubled Israel. No indication was given by the Lord-Lieutenant that his instructions would enable him to withdraw the hated tokens, and Midleton, having supported him in vindicating the offended dignity of Government, felt it to be a duty from which he could not shrink to warn him confidentially that

[1] To Newcastle from Houghton, 1st Sept., 1724.

[2] Midleton to his brother, 31st October, 1724.—*MS.*

nothing could reconcile the people to their substitution for the lawful coin of the realm. The Grand Jury before whom the case was laid proved obdurate, refusing every adjuration and entreaty of the Chief Justice to find a true bill ; and Whitehead became an object of such general hatred that he was glad to retire upon the Chief Justiceship of the Common Pleas.

Reiteration in the *Gazette* of the Treasury order, that only a third of the original sum authorised should be issued, had no effect of appeasement, and Carteret was ere long obliged to advise the Secretary of State that he saw no prospect of reconciliating local opinion to the upholding of the patent. Casual expressions of disappointment by his colleagues were interpreted hastily by hangers-on at Whitehall as foreshadowing his early recall, and these in their turn gave place to prognostics of Midleton's removal, as he had been found inflexible[1] on the subject. His brother recommended him to put it plainly to the Viceroy whether he did not deem it for the public service that the Great Seal should be placed in other hands. "The honest part he had acted in reference to the patent was, he might be assured, a mortal sin, not to be forgiven."

Confirmed by statute in the exclusive power of hearing and determining appeals from all other tribunals, the British House of Lords proceeded, as opportunities arose, to extinguish points of substantial or technical difference between the courts of Westminster and Dublin. Divergent equities growing out of local legislation or custom were brushed aside by Chancellor Macclesfield and his learned colleagues, of whom Harcourt was the most eloquent and influential. While sitting alone in Chancery he had acquired no little reputation for patience, research, and skill in lucid exposition, and by his thoughtful care in concatenating precedents, recent and remote, forming thus a supplementary code of judge-made law for the maintenance and strengthening of whatever still remained of feudalism in the system of landed property. His character as a judge was irreproachable for fairness between man and man, but no one infused into his decisions more of the spirit of that traditional system of class on which local rule rested so long. Before his time it was doubtful whether the trustees of real estate might not dispose of it for valuable consideration, preserving the uses substantially they were ap-

[1] Midleton to his brother, 18th March, 1725.—*MS.*

pointed to protect.[1] Harcourt declared, in the temper of a man proud of his ancestry, that if no precedent could be shown him forbidding the commutation proposed, he would create one. Thenceforth, to break an entail it became indispensable that the son and heir should have reached the age of twenty-one and should join in the act; whereby an additional twist was given to the rope which fettered the free circulation of property in land.[2] So likewise he established the doctrine that where money was left by will to be laid out in land it should be held to be land before it could be so laid out, and should go by the rule of freehold inheritance to the heir in remainder, and not, according to the law of chattel, to the next of kin. Another stride was thus made in the velvet shoe of unpolitical-looking equity, towards the completion of that curious and subtle system meant to favour the concentration of realty in the smaller number of hands. Harcourt ruled that where a settlement had been made on younger children, and there was no son, the eldest daughter should, like her sisters, be held entitled only to the benefit of her portion as a younger child, that the estate might go unbroken to the remainder-man, as it would have gone to a son. In the patent conferring on him nobility in 1711, he carefully recounted the knightly virtues of his progenitors, and boasted that the place from which he took his title had been in his family 600 years. Walpole appreciated at their true significance the drift and tendency of Harcourt's decisions, and being satisfied that he had severed his political connection with his Jacobite friends, he thought the ex-Keeper of the Royal conscience might be made a useful adviser to the Hanoverian dynasty. It was still, perhaps, too soon to give high office to the avowed confidant of Oxford and Bolingbroke, but not too soon to lead him to expect it by applauding the sagacity of his judgments in appeal. The reversal of some of Midleton's decrees had been in terms so supercilious as to kindle the suspicion in the watchful mind of Thomas Brodrick that they indicated a desire, if not intent, of driving his brother from the Irish Chancery.

The impression grew that the removal of Midleton was contemplated. The Chancellor thereupon tendered his resignation, and when asked the cause, placed his brother's letter in the hands

[1] Pye *v.* Gore: Williams's Reports, 128.
[2] Lingen *v.* Sowray: *Ibid.*, 172.

of his Excellency, who seemed much startled at its contents, and sought to dissuade him from acting on the advice it contained.[1] He warmly remonstrated against what he designated an error of judgment; for if the suspicion were groundless he would be throwing away power for nought, and would only be playing into the hands of his enemies. But Midleton had made up his mind to quit, and only doubted how best to make the King aware of his reasons. Carteret did not conceal his regret lest the conduct of business in the Upper House at Dublin should thenceforth depend upon someone who would bring to the task neither political, local, nor personal knowledge,[2] for he knew that no member of the Irish Bench or Bar was likely to be chosen.

His confidential advice was reluctantly taken by the Cabinet that the provocative of so much unabated odium should, by some means, be withdrawn. Negotiations were accordingly opened with Wood, and for a valuable consideration the ambitious ironmonger consented to release Walpole from his undertaking to force the Kendal coinage into circulation. The Lord-Lieutenant summoned[3] the members of the Privy Council who were in or near town to meet on "extraordinary business," and when he disclosed the long-hoped-for issue of the controversy—that the patent had been withdrawn, everybody was delighted, and they seemed to show most joy who had hitherto never given that project any opposition. Speaker Conolly's zeal carried him so far as to say that he believed God Almighty inspired the Ministry who advised his Majesty to the measures he had now taken, and he said he rose to give thanks in the name of all the people. The Lord-Lieutenant described the act as one of great condescension and special goodness on the part of his Majesty; but the Archbishop could not refrain from saying to those he trusted "—if a man throws me into a millpond, and then pulls me out of it all over wet: hath he not done me a favour, taking the matter altogether?"[4] Finding it hopeless to force back the popular current, Carteret sought to devise new channels wherein it might peacefully flow. His organs and agents gave out that he meant to search forthwith into the abuses long known to exist in the Vice-Treasury and the Barrack Administration, and

[1] Brodrick Corresp., 3rd April, 1725.—*MS.*

[2] To his brother, 10th and 29th April, and 13th May, 1725.—*MS.*

[3] 20th August, 1725.

[4] Brodrick Corresp., 25th August, 1725.—*MS.*

the freshness of the promises of relief from frequent billeting caught the popular feeling, and helped to divert attention from other causes of complaint. Nor did the viceregal promise prove illusory. The joint Vice-Treasurership had long been held as an absentee sinecure by Lord Falmouth and Mr. Edgcumbe, the whole conduct of the Department being left to Mr. Prat, a well-bred impostor, who, when his accounts were sifted, proved to be £75,000 in default. The Commissariat Department and Barrack Master's Offices were riddled in like manner, and an arrear of £120,000 was found to be due to the soldiery on what were called their "clearings." Carteret was regarded as another "Daniel come to judgment."[1]

Absenteeism infected all ranks and conditions, clerical and lay, owners of estates and holders of office; and Townshend had no scruple in telling Primate Boulter that he wished him to ordain and endow a man named Power, in reward for having turned informer against a troublesome gang of deer-stealers in Hampshire known as the "Waltham Blacks." King remonstrated in vain against the scandal and sin of such an abuse of patronage, but it was perpetrated notwithstanding, and Boulter continued to be a bow anchor of Cabinet influence in Ireland to the end.[2] The aged Metropolitan of Dublin could not dissuade Carteret from gratifying the greed of his Cabinet colleagues for sinecure dignities and benefices in Ireland. Their dependants were thus provided for to the extent of £20,000 a-year, while not £500 a-year had been given to native clergymen. Carteret promised the reversion of the Mastership of the Rolls to an eminent member of the Irish Bar, a Mr. Carter, who sat for Mayo in the House of Commons; but when he was absent in London Boulter, acting as one of the Lords Justices, strongly deprecated such an appointment as adverse to the English interest:

"When I left England I did not doubt but your Lordship was sufficiently sensible how much the English interest had been neglected for many years, and of the necessity there was of taking other measures for the future. We should likewise be very much alarmed if the Attorney-General were made Lord Chancellor. Against him the English here have nothing to object, but they think the only way to keep things quiet and

[1] Nicholson to Wake, 13th July, 1725.—*MS.*

[2] Coghill to Southwell, 28th Dec., 1725.—*MS.*

make them easy to the Ministry is by filling the great places with natives of England." [1]

This policy prevailed, and Dalton, an eminent pleader in the Temple, was sent over as Chief Baron; other judgeships, as theretofore, being bestowed on practitioners, sometimes with good and sometimes with indifferent repute at the English Bar. The Rolls hardly then ranked as a judicial appointment; Carter held the Viceroy to his word and eventually obtained it. But for the rest the old system prevailed, and what the administration of criminal justice was thereunder may be illustrated by a case mentioned by Bishop Nicholson in a private letter to his correspondent at Lambeth. A poor fanatic was tried at Derry before Mr. Baron Pocklington for preaching in the open air. As a Catholic pilgrim, who believed he had seen visions and imagined he had wrought miraculous cures, he adjured the peasantry wherever he came to repent their sins and make their peace with Heaven ere the elements should melt with fervent heat. Far from evading the charge, he asked only for opportunity to tell the Court the reasons of his faith and why he had taken to his self-denying way of life. The judge refused to hear his blasphemy, told the jury that his guilt was not denied, and he sentenced him to stand in the pillory; to be twice publicly whipped through the town, and to be branded with the letter P, all of which was carried into execution.[2]

Carteret, who was freer from prejudice of race and party than most of his colleagues, enjoyed as an elixir the talk of Swift, in whose society he spent many a leisure hour. It was impossible to resist, had he been even so inclined, the fascination of that marvellous tongue. If even now one cannot read unmoved his talk with Pope on paper, how must it have told on the ear of one of the few other men of his time whose learning and understanding enabled him to appreciate every allusion to books and hint of fancy. Carteret was too glad of such a companion in what he deemed exile; and when asked on one occasion how he got on in Ireland, he is said to have exclaimed, "I disarm when I cannot always satisfy Dr. Swift." One of his ways of pleasing the Dean was to efface as far as he dare the feeling of national exclusion caused by imported appointments. Absentee pensions

[1] To Townshend, 29th April, 1725.
[2] To Primate Wake, 30th July, 1725.—*MS.*

he could not prevent; and the stowing of Court Chaplains into Irish sees he could not stay. But he did what he could in legal and other offices, applying the just and natural rule in Ireland, which in Scotland was never departed from. He dared not gratify The Drapier by appointing him to any public trust. At one time he asked to be a county magistrate, at another to be added to the Irish Board. "You would not care for such feathers of recognition, I am sure," said the Viceroy. "No," replied Swift, "I feel that I might be serviceable in both capacities, but as I would not job at the Board, nor suffer abuses to pass at Quarter Sessions, I suppose you will not indulge me for the good of this unhappy nation. If I were a worthless Member of Parliament, or a bishop, who would vote for the Court, my request might be granted." To have bestowed on the Dean any official compliment, would have been to provoke recall; but through Lady Carteret, or her mother, Lady Worsley, with whom Swift was intimate, Carteret let him know the truth of his inability. Bolton, Stopford, Delaney and others benefited no doubt by their friend's exclusion; but when he was in London the sting of the *Examiner* having passed away, Walpole asked him to dinner. He sought to plead in person for a change of administrative policy in Ireland, not by complaining of Carteret's acts, but as desiring to dispense him from the obligation of reiterating them; and he was pleased with an early occasion being named by the Minister for hearing fully all he had to say in favour of a different system. Walpole listened unmoved. He had built up his power on a system of exclusion, and he believed that its ascendancy could best be maintained by adherence to that fundamental rule. A better and purer Legislature in Ireland would be of no use to him, or to the Court, for keeping in good humour and good condition the majorities in Parliament on which they relied; and to throw away on men of mere native merit the various posts and pensions on the Irish Establishment touched him no deeper than the emotion that was suggested only by a passing smile. He took no trouble to refute the arguments of the Dean; and his visitor came away from the interview painfully conscious that his expostulations had been vain. In a letter to Peterboro' he gave an account of the conversation with a view to its being submitted to Walpole, who took no exception to its accuracy. Swift tarried at Twickenham till the end of summer, preparing

Gulliver's Travels for publication; his frequent visits to Bolingbroke, at Chelsea, justifying Ministers, they thought, in considering him a subtle Jacobite in the thin disguise of a man of letters and a wit. He was graciously received at Leicester House, and once more dreamt perhaps of better days to come. His new book was published in October, 1726, anonymously, his friends affecting not to know the author. A letter from Mrs. Howard, in November, about a present of poplin he had sent her for the Princess, says that the secret was not long kept, and in England the fame of the author rose higher than ever.

Carteret advised a revision of the Irish Privy Council, to which were added several persons of local weight and influence. On the promulgation of the new list the Primate and others of his way of thinking felt aggrieved because they had not been consulted, and besides, they thought it very much lessened that authority they imagined it was designed they should have there.[1]

Success in resistance in central authority was in Ireland too signal to be unrealised elsewhere. Disaffection in Scotland had been silenced by the suppression of Mar's Rebellion ten years before; but it was not dead. The arms and symbols of Jacobitism were hid away, but repinings and grudges here and there, and changes brought about by the Union were ready to fan into flickering flame matter-of-fact discontent at new fiscal exactions. An arbitrary and unexplained attempt by the Treasury to impose a duty of sixpence a bushel on malt, which had never been previously paid in Scotland, was met by a dogged refusal in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and other towns. Ill-provided efforts to enforce it were put to rout by the angry brewers and their men, and when the authorities essayed to exact their demands, serious tumults arose; and Government was called upon to interfere decisively. The Scotch Secretary of State was beset with appeals for and against the tax; and swayed, as was believed, by the advice of the Lord Advocate, and the Lord Clerk Register, he forbore to take any measures of a peremptory kind, which, it was feared, might lead to destructive, if not sanguinary conflict. The Court of Session ordered the traders to give security for the duty and come prepared to pay; but the order was disregarded, and though Ministers would gladly have kept the affair out of Parliament, it was too tempting a subject to escape notice. Ever

[1] To the Duke of Newcastle, May 19th, 1726.

since the end of the war the Scotch had been nominally charged the same duty upon malt as their neighbours in England; but nothing was actually paid, and the sum not being large, the Exchequer winked at the evasion. The English Members, however, complained at the exception thus shown, their constituents being compelled to pay £750,000 a year. The financial wizard was ready to humour the Committee of Ways and Means by promises to set matters right by unsparing exaction, or by explaining the deficit away in mystified account. But he had another purpose to serve, of which he thought more. Roxburgh was one of the surviving Members of the minority in the Cabinet who held with Carteret; and the more aggravated the contumacy of the Glasgow brewers was made to appear, the more heinous seemed the impunity which they had been shown; and the easier it would be to get rid of the Duke, whom he and Townshend chose to suspect of favouring Irish refusal to accept the Birmingham tokens.

John, fifth Earl of Roxburgh, had been created a Duke for the part he had taken in promoting the Scottish Union, and having married a daughter of Nottingham, was identified with the section to which in turn Shrewsbury, Sunderland, and Cowper had belonged, and who now were identified more or less openly with Carteret and Cadogan. In the first Cabinet of George I. he had been made Secretary of State for Scotland, and though not particularly credited with administrative aptitude or zeal in repressing the rebellion, he had been supported by the Marlborough influence; and if not very popular north of the Tweed, had few, if any, enemies on the banks of the Thames. But the Treasury grasped at the pretext afforded by Roxburgh's neutral attitude in the malt tax affair for taking another step in centralisation, and Newcastle consulted Townshend by letter whether it was not clear that so long as there was a Scotch Secretary of State there would be no quiet in Scotland when parties rose to any height. At the same time, he wrote privately urging the removal of Roxburgh. How this end was to be compassed was plain. Walpole being at Houghton, he wrote—"I doubt not that you will consult with our friend, the Duchess of Kendal, and I hope neither her Grace nor your lordship imagine we propose to have anything done in this matter without her entire approbation and concurrence. If you agree with

us that this is now right to be done, you will show my letter to the King." [1]

Walpole recommended the suppression of the office as the only way of damping the spirit of insubordination on the Clyde. He had no doubt that Roxburgh and Dundas had encouraged it, though he had no proof of it; and, as the Highlanders were reported to be giving up their arms, there was no reason to fear that the Jacobites were making political capital out of the affair. But Roxburgh ought to be removed, and accordingly instructions were sent by Townshend from Hanover, under which Newcastle, in the King's name, required the Secretary for Scotland to give up the Seals.[2] The Duke remained one of the Lords Justices, but henceforth declined to attend.

The Council of Regency despatched Lord Islay, with plenary powers, to deal with the prevailing troubles. With tact and temper, he succeeded partly in repressing and partly in conciliating those who had already begun to disagree among themselves, and on whom the dismissal of the Secretary fell as an unexpected blow. Islay was content to exercise the authority without the official style and dignity, and no one was appointed to the office for several years.

In a calmer sea no ship of fortune floated more securely with all sails set than did that of the Chancellor. Yet already his doom was near. Those colleagues whose rapid rise had beguiled him into over-confidently trusting them were ready to look on passively while he was assailed and overpowered for complicity in abuses, whose prescriptive title could not be denied, but whose iniquity could not longer be endured. Lords Oxford and Morpeth petitioned the House of Commons as trustees for the Duchess of Montagu, that inquiry should be made into the way in which large sums of money had been dealt with by officers of the Court of Chancery in misuse of their public functions, with the presumed cognisance or connivance of their judicial chief, to whom they were alone responsible. Suspicion long smouldering in the public mind suddenly burst into flame, that suitors in the Court had grave reason to complain that the decision of causes was habitually delayed to enable the Masters in Chancery to make use of the large funds lodged in their hands. It was likewise loudly

[1] To Townshend, 6th August, 1725.—*MS.*

[2] 25th August, 1725.

asserted that accumulations under the name of presents or fees were exacted in the progress of suits, of which no account could be obtained. Stories were told of large sums paid for appointments in Chancery, wholly or in part disbelieved, through lack of verification never likely to be forthcoming. In the heyday of speculation strange things daily happened, or were said to happen, outside Westminster. In November, 1724, no misgiving clouded the mind of the Chancellor as to the security of his position; yet even then ruin impended over him. Walpole, to relieve the Government from any share of responsibility, had a committee of the Privy Council named, who, with three of the Judges and the law advisers of the Crown, were to inquire into the alleged abuses and report thereon. They found that many of the heaviest charges of malversation were true, and that it was difficult to exonerate Macclesfield from acquiescence in much that could not be defended. In the hope of setting himself right with the public, he issued a stringent order that all moneys of suitors should forthwith be paid from time to time by the Masters into the Bank of England, whence none could be drawn without the joint cheque of the six clerks, the particular Masters, and the Governor of the Bank. But this was held only to amount to an admission of culpable laxity in times past. The outcry waxed louder, and his colleagues intimated to the Chancellor that he had better resign. The Great Seal was put in Commission, and Sir Peter King was appointed Speaker of the Upper House. Sir George Oxenden, seconded by Dodington, moved that Thomas, Earl of Macclesfield, be impeached of high crimes and misdemeanour. Pulteney and Wyndham objected, on the constitutional ground that before an inquiry made by the House itself into the facts of the case, and its full consideration of them specifically, there was no precedent for its assuming the character of public accuser; but their objections were overborne, and by 273 to 164 the impeachment was voted. Upon the trial, which lasted thirteen days, it was proved that four thousand pounds and five thousand guineas were paid for appointments to Masterships; and that balances belonging to suitors squandered in gambling and in the Stock Exchange were greater than were even suspected. For the defence it was contended that by the civil law and at common law, the sale of offices had never been forbidden, and that the statute of Edward VI. which had interdicted

such bargains, excepted appointments in the King's Bench and Common Pleas, and left many others unnamed. The practices now impugned had always prevailed; and instances were alleged of £800 having been paid as fees for Masterships to former Keepers of the Great Seal. The House of Lords unanimously declared the ex-Chancellor guilty, and sentenced him to pay a fine of £30,000, and to be confined in the Tower till it was paid.

One of the few who had had the courage to plead precedent and usage in defence of the arraigned Chancellor was Sir Philip Yorke, with whom the obligations of office did not outweigh those of personal and professional friendship. To Macclesfield he owed his introduction to Newcastle, who returned him to Parliament, and whom he never forsook throughout the fluctuations of his fortune.

Chief Justice King, created Lord Ockham, entered the Cabinet as Chancellor. He was the son of a tradesman at Exeter, who, in the hours stolen from his father's business, taught himself Latin, and showed such genuine love of learning that his uncle, Mr. Locke, the metaphysician, obtained leave to send him to Leyden, then highly in vogue with English Presbyterians, to complete his education. He early made his mark as an advocate on the Western Circuit, and through his relative's interest with the owner of Berealston was returned for that infinitesimal borough. He meddled little in party strife, but not unfrequently gave up lucrative business to attend at St. Stephen's. He tenderly cheered his best friend in his declining days, which were said to have been lengthened by his devotion.

Pulteney refused to remain any longer in a secondary position, and feeling himself unjustly excluded from the Cabinet, ceased to be Cofferer of the Household, Newcastle's nephew, Lord Lincoln, taking his place, to be in turn succeeded as Constable of the Tower by the young Duke of Bolton. The Great Seal of Ireland was conferred on Richard West, a practitioner of eminence in Lincoln's Inn. Argyll, retaining his seat in the Cabinet, was gazetted Master-General of the Ordnance instead of Cadogan, and the new Duke of Dorset became Lord Steward of the Household. The altered state of the Cabinet stood thus:—Primate Wake, Lord Chancellor King, Dukes of Devonshire, Kingston, Argyll, Dorset and Newcastle, Lords Townshend, Carteret and Berkeley, Sir R. Walpole and Mr. Pelham.

Walpole consulted the new Keeper of the King's conscience on

the strange design of the Prince and Princess of Wales to have the Electorate settled on their eldest son, and the Crown of Great Britain and Ireland on their second son. The King objected to disinheriting his lawful heir without his consent when he should come of age, and the scheme was laid aside. Sir Robert had thought it his duty, moreover, to tell George I. that if the children were not soon brought over to England and educated there as befitted their condition, neither might ever enjoy the Crown, so strong had the feeling become against the idea of the country being ruled by a foreigner.[1]

Large as were the resources at the command of the Minister, and lavish as was his hand, the claims upon him were so numerous, that he sometimes misgave his ability to maintain his credit. Promises of place and pay to the undeserving, though made at the longest date, would still come due, would remain overdue, and at last would form a subject of protest. What was the great financier to do? He bethought him of several schemes to stave off Ministerial reproach. One is described by his sarcastic son in language too pleasant to be spoiled by paraphrase. "The revival of the Order of the Bath,[2] was an artful bank of thirty-six ribands, to supply a fund of favours in lieu of places. He meant, too, to stave off the demand for Garters, and intended that the red should be a step to the blue, and accordingly he took one of the former himself. He offered the new order to old Sarah for her grandson, the young Duke of Marlborough, and for the Duke of Bedford, who had married her grand-daughter. She haughtily replied they should take nothing but the Garter. 'Madam,' said Sir Robert, coolly, 'they who take the Bath will the sooner have the Garter.' The next year he took the latter himself with the Duke of Richmond, both having been previously installed Knights of the revived institution." This clutching at decorations for himself when at the height of power, made him the object of much spite and envy, and looks at first sight inexplicable. But is it certain that this was but the ravening of ambition, which, unsatisfied with the profits and dignities of office, turned to snip the tender points of a riband when nothing more substantial was to be had? May not other motives have been operative in that subtle and cynical mind?

[1] Lord King's Diary.
[2] 27th May, 1725.

George I. desired to escape from the routine of ceremonial during his stay in his old home, and relied on his Ministers keeping at a distance the numerous courtiers and officials who sought to prove their devotion by asking leave to wait upon him there. Even Admiral Norris, who so long had held command afloat, was refused permission to present himself; but his Majesty was much pleased with the visit of the King of Prussia, whom he especially wished to conciliate.[1]

Townshend seems to have entertained a strange notion that to engage firmly the States General and France in offensive and defensive alliance it was necessary to hold out to them a prospect of territorial acquisition, in which Great Britain might have a share. His project was, in fact, neither more nor less than one for the partition of the Austrian Netherlands between the allied Powers, which he communicated confidentially to Horace Walpole at Paris, and, no doubt, to his brother in England.[2] The shrewd Envoy objected, without reserve, to a scheme so fraught with mischief, and it received no encouragement from the First Lord of the Treasury, whose fixed policy was to keep clear of all Continental entanglements; and it probably was never seriously broached either at Versailles or at the Hague. The Secretary was successful, however, without such perilous bidding for aid, in bringing the French and Dutch into reciprocal terms, whereby the three Powers bound themselves to furnish specific contingents by sea and land within a given time, should they be necessary.

By the Treaty of Hanover[3] the league headed by France, England, and Holland was confirmed against that of Austria and Spain. All Europe armed as though war were imminent. As Elector, George I. was gratified by seeing the number of his troops raised from 16,000 to 22,000; and, as King of England, from 18,000 to 26,000 men; besides which 12,000 Hessians were taken into pay at an expense of £240,000 a-year; while 20,000 seamen were voted for the Navy. Great dissatisfaction was naturally expressed at such an augmentation of warlike expenditure for no definite purpose, and, as the event proved, with no assignable result. The First Lord was too shrewd not to

[1] Townshend to Norris, 30th July, 1725.—*MS.*
[2] Townshend to Walpole, 27th Aug., 1725.
[3] 3rd Sept., 1725.

perceive that the maintenance of the Protestant succession at home was as little likely to be served as that of the balance of power abroad by such a course of policy. He knew that light taxes, and a yearly expanding trade with all the world, were the best securities for domestic tranquillity; and that if ever we should be called upon in a real case of need to make our sword the casting-weight in the scales of European liberty, it would be all the heavier if not too early drawn. The majority of the Cabinet were incapable of such foresight or forbearance; the classes in whose name they governed loved large establishments, which held out the prospect of quick promotions, lavish allowances, the chance of prize money, and the certainty of pay: and as the Finance Minister could not retain office without providing the means in question, he agreed to engage as many of the Commons as were necessary to vote the requisite supplies.[1]

The Bishop of Derry informed Primate Wake that a measure would be sent over, some clauses whereof (particularly that which rendered a recent convert from Rome incapable of a public trust till he had passed a quarantine of seven years) were thought unnecessary and unjust by many who were staunch to the Protestant ascendancy. There was another clause which others thought much more hard—that a Popish wife should prevent the preferment of the most unquestionably sincere Protestant husband; and yet milder methods had so frequently been despised and eluded that the local lawgivers deemed it indispensable. If the magistrates were more vigilant in looking after unlicensed priests all would be well; and, without this, nothing would be effectual.

He warned Townshend, however, that Opposition meditated a great onslaught on Ministers for the Hanover Treaty. "He had the curiosity to open some of their letters, and found them full of this language. Count Staremberg gave William Pulteney great expectations of the materials he could furnish him with when it might be done with safety."[2]

In April a supplemental vote of £90,000 had been passed to defray a debt incurred on the Civil List, chiefly, as was alleged, in the outlay of secret service money abroad, where Russia threatened a renewal of hostilities against Denmark; an ally

[1] Coxe's "Life of Walpole," Chapter 28.
[2] 29th Nov., 1725.

whom England, at all costs, was bound to defend. Pulteney for the first time led the Opposition to the Ministry by whose broken promises he had been disappointed ; and thenceforward the memorable contest began between him and Walpole which terminated only after many years in the overthrow of the Minister.

It is said by his biographer that Walpole never thoroughly approved the Treaty of Hanover, which tended to sever the relations theretofore subsisting with the Court of Vienna, and to provoke the active enmity of Russia suspected by Townshend of supplying arms and ammunition to the disaffected in Scotland and Ireland, and deserving, therefore, to have an embargo laid on her vessels in our ports. The First Lord was practically for peace at almost any price, and for economy in almost any foreign purpose. When Townshend, therefore, proposed that Parliament should be asked for an additional hundred thousand pounds to bring back Sweden from alliance with the Muscovite, Sir Robert declared it to be impossible, and recommended, instead, that £50,000, if required, should be made up out of the Civil List. It has, moreover, been said that George I., who was accused of stimulating Townshend to conclude the Treaty while at Hanover, for the sake of his Electorate, was in reality opposed to it, as committing him to antagonism with the Emperor. But were it done he would not decline to uphold it as a means of checking a combination which openly threatened, not only the West India trade, but the safety and tranquillity of the Kingdom, and the result appeared to justify Townshend's misgivings and his prognostics.

Well-born Jacobitism withered in an atmosphere wherein every other form of political romance had given place to the unbelieving individualism of climb and clutch, eat, drink, and die. Ormond and Berwick were virtually naturalised in France, and Marechal Keith in Germany. Harcourt, Abingdon, and Anglesea had made their peace, gone to Court, and wished to be considered sensible men. The young Duke of Wharton informed his friends at Vienna and Paris that Bathurst had quite renounced the hopeless cause ; that Gower was like to follow, and that Wyndham was the secret spring of the desertion.[1] He and Bolingbroke began to ruminate the possibility of founding a new

[1] To Atterbury, 8th August, 1725.

party on a Democratic basis, looking for their promised land through Parliament, rather than through Court; and to the power of the Press rather than that of the plot. Bolingbroke for a time shammed political death, then sleep,[1] and then returned to Whig principles. But Walpole was not to be deceived. No blandishments or arguments, promises or stipulations, could beguile him into allowing the gate of the Senate to be unbarred. The outer world never thoroughly understood how he came to resume title and fortune and airs of fashion just as of yore, yet could not gain admittance to the Hereditary Chamber. But the Peers had not for generations before, and have never since, recognised any right but their own to share their legislative privileges with any claimant, be he whom he may; and the fact that a King's mistress had sold the respite of the King's writ to Henry St. John was no reason why they should resolve that he, as one of them, should make and unmake laws for England. Whether they would have firmly and consistently held together in refusal, had the insidious grasp of Walpole been withdrawn, it is vain to speculate; but, the grasp being inflexible, the excluded demagogue had nothing for it but to appeal to the crowd. As time went on, and the Viscount was not readmitted to his place in the Peers, he would have been the most ungrateful of men if he did not repay partial pardon with demands growing ever more earnest for complete restoration. But the Cabinet were not to be coaxed or threatened into letting him reappear in the Assembly where he had been once supreme, and might possibly make himself supreme again. He appealed to the powerful advocate that took credit for having opened for him the way of return; and, yielding to the weakness that seems to beset every politician whose influence is built on the power of rhetoric, he resorted to methods the most opposite to those he had hitherto pursued.

In a violent letter to the King, he undertook to show that if the Minister were not removed the country would be ruined. The letter was conveyed through the Duchess, with whom Lady Bolingbroke was found in conversation by Walpole. On his entering the closet the King handed him the invective, which only led him to advise earnestly that the request for an audience should be granted. George I. repeatedly refused, but at length yielded,

[1] Letters to Swift from his farm at Dawley.

and appointed a time for receiving the angry importunate, and allowed him ample opportunity to state his views. Ere he had concluded, Lechmere, the Attorney-General, came with papers requiring the Sign Manual immediately; and on learning the impediment in his way, he pressed for audience in such a state of excitement that he forgot what had brought him, and spent all his vivacious energy in railing against St. John and against Walpole for having allowed him to be admitted. When asked by Walpole what was the point or purpose of the indictment against him, his Majesty only laughed, exclaiming: "*Bagatelles, bagatelles!*"[1] But the mistress's cognisance of the proceedings could not be concealed, and the revival thenceforth of mutual distrust and enmity became inappeasable.

The Duchess feared that her rival with the King would be allowed to accompany him on his return, and she made Townshend write to Walpole that Ministers might use influence to prevent it. There was nothing, Newcastle said, that he would not do to please "their good friend"; but he shrank from meddling in domestic arrangements with which he thought they had properly nothing to do, though he was evidently afraid of consequences to the Ministry should the Countess Platen become established at Hampton Court.[2]

The phantom of Jesuit plotting still haunted the dreams of Ministers; and the unceremonious use made of the Post-Office fed their fears and suspicions continually. It was debated in the Cabinet whether Lords Kincardine, Wigton, Dundonald, Balmerino, and Mr. Lockhart should not be prosecuted for high treason. It is due to the memory of George I. to note that he expressed the strongest repugnance to the proposal, declaring that he wanted no more blood or forfeitures, and it was dropped accordingly.[3]

Townshend was anxious to get back to England early in the winter; and though he had persuaded his Majesty to set out in the middle of November, the yacht being duly in readiness under Norris's command, Christmas approached before a day was fixed for departure.

[1] H. Etough to H. Walpole, 7th August, 1751.—*MS.*

[2] Newcastle to Townshend, 23rd Sept., 1725.—*MS.*, "Very private."

[3] Lockhart: "Memoirs," II., 398.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CABINET OUTLIVES THE KING.

1727.

Claim for Restitution of Gibraltar—Secret Service—Pulteney and Bolingbroke publish the *Craftsman*—Political Perspective—Vision of Camelick—Prosecution of the Press—Death of George I.—Letter of Fleury—Spencer Compton fails to make a Ministry—Ministers Resume—Berkeley Removed—Shippen's Speech on the Civil List—Church Patronage—Absentee Tax—Increase of Irish Pensions Debt—Further Penal Laws.

ON receipt of advices from Vienna that the Court of Spain had once more resolved on peremptorily demanding the restitution of the Rock, Townshend desired H. Walpole to communicate them to the French Government; and to inquire how far we could depend upon their friendship and assistance in preserving rights essential to our trade.[1] An explicit declaration in the sense desired was there upon given, for which the Envoy warmly thanked Fleury.[2] He hoped Stanhope would say plainly to their Catholic Majesties how unjust the Government of England regarded the claim thus suddenly made. If Gibraltar had been ceded to England for Philip's quiet and enjoyment of the Crown of Spain, and the cession had been confirmed by the Treaties of Utrecht, London, and Madrid, what could be more unjust than to demand its surrender? It was a step equally imprudent and ungrateful. "The demand was made as if England was at the mercy of Spain; and the threat was that unless the fortress was abandoned we should lose all our trade to the West Indies." If King Philip were master of London he could not have made a more peremptory and haughty demand. It was astonishing to think that his Catholic Majesty should have so little knowledge of the English nation as to

[1] August 4th, 1725.—*MS.*

[2] H. Walpole to Townshend, 29th August, 1725.—*MS.*

believe they would patiently bear such language and suffer their King to be treated in such an ignominious manner. Were the demand then ever so reasonable, they would resent the manner of it; but when they considered the just title his Majesty had, and the advantage it was to their trade, it was inconceivable what a spirit of resentment a demand made in such a manner would excite in Parliament. The nature of our Government was such that his Majesty could not by his own authority give up Gibraltar if he would, it being by the laws of the land as much part of Great Britain as Portsmouth or any other town in England. So far from being influenced by the King, or the Cabinet, to consent, Parliament would be ready to impeach any Minister that should advise it. Far from being kept in awe for fear of the loss of our trade to Spain and the West Indies, a great many thought that, considering the present situation of our naval force, it might give an opportunity of obtaining better settlements and advantages of trade than were now enjoyed.[1]

The Royal Speech on opening the Session contained the startling announcement regarding Austria and Spain: "I have received information on which I can entirely depend, that the placing the Pretender upon the throne of this realm is one of the Articles of the secret engagements; the price being the giving up the trade of this nation to one Power, and Gibraltar and Port Mahon to another. What indignation this must raise in the breast of every Protestant Briton." Great indignation was indeed expressed in Parliament. It was unanimously resolved to raise the Army to 26,000 men, the Navy to 20,000, and the supplies to little less than £3,000,000. The Imperial Ambassador, seeing how things were in England, immediately wrote to the Emperor, advising him to declare publicly that the allegations in the Royal Speech were false; and Charles VI., unacquainted with the working of the English Constitution, sent over an indiscreet declaration, which, by his order, M. Palm presented to the King and dispersed throughout the country. This insult could not be brooked, and Walpole carried an Address, without dissent, "to express the highest resentment at the affront and indignity offered to his most sacred Majesty;" and M. Palm was ordered forthwith to quit the Kingdom.[2]

[1] Walpole to Stanhope, 21st August, 1725.—*MS.*

[2] Townshend to Sir C. Cottrell.—*MS.*

George I. had for twelve years occupied the Throne, and still enjoyed the unquestioning friendship of France and the States General. The country, on the whole, was prosperous, and the rumblings of political earthquake were but faintly and at far intervals heard. Argyll assured his colleagues in Cabinet that no apprehension need be felt of Jacobite movements in Scotland; and Carteret told them that the ferment in Ireland had gone down, and that he could undertake for unbroken quiet there. Yet Henry Pelham, as Secretary-at-War, asked for eight thousand additional troops for the service of the year; which brought up the total standing force to 26,383 men; and for a vote of £885,494 9s. 4d. for their pay. Disappointing as was this result of reiterated promises of stability and peace, and keen as were the taunts and reproaches evoked, Government had their way. The hostility of Spain had not abated; Austria and Russia were still to be regarded as foes in ambuscade; and the prevalence of seditious writings, more virulent and violent in their character than recently known, proved that the elements of disaffection still existed, and that they were reckoned on by those abroad, who incessantly plotted and prepared for invasion. To provide for the increased expenditure, Walpole moved, in committee of ways and means, that a land tax should be imposed of fourpence in the pound. It was naturally opposed, but after some debate was carried by a majority of two to one.[1]

In Opposition, Pulteney led for many years the dicontented Whigs, and rendered himself so troublesome that Government would fain have won him over upon any terms. Princess Caroline herself, on one occasion, undertook to bring about a reconciliation; offering him a peerage and Secretaryship of State. But resentment for injury and insult had become with him a stronger passion than ambition, and he declared that he would never sit again in Council with the man who he felt had betrayed him.

Pulteney, it was said, had used his intimacy at Leicester House to confirm old prejudices against his rival, and thereby to smooth the way for superseding him in office. The wrongs he resented were not likely to render him nice in criticism of Ministerial acts or suggestions of Ministerial motives; but the charge of slow poisoning the Heir Apparent's mind rests only

[1] 27th January, 1727.

on circumstantial evidence, and the vehement imputations of those who did not pretend to be impartial, or affect to be fastidious in the life-long controversy. Foolish vows that he never would employ Sir Robert for his Minister when he became King rest on no substantial foundation; and the conduct of George II. during the whole of his reign towards Pulteney tends to rebut the allegation. Perhaps the strongest thing that can be adduced in its confirmation is in the anxiety Walpole did not conceal at the time as to his position and his fear that a Cabinet including Pulteney might be formed under the nominal headship of Compton, and the direction in foreign affairs of Carteret.

In concert with Bolingbroke, Pulteney undertook the publication of the *Craftsman*, which surpassed in vituperative eloquence and vigour all that had gone before it, and which no doubt contributed in no slight measure to disseminate the belief in Walpole's pre-eminence in parliamentary corruption and administrative prodigality, that contributed to his eventual fall. Not that any political truth or literary merit could in itself have appreciably shaken the power of the Minister, or that any diffusion, however wide, of the railings of the *Craftsman* could have changed the balance of parliamentary parties. But when external difficulties arose, and personal disappointments alienated adherents, popular odium furnished a decent and even plausible pretence for individual desertion and hostility; and in this way the ceaseless vilipending of the *Craftsman* practically told.

Bolingbroke, failing to persuade the Minister into allowing him to preach to his peers, resolved to assert for himself the right of talking in print to the people. But how? He was, of all men, the last to cast the pearls of which he was so proud to those he regarded as the swine, and for all the effect his fine periods and delicate sarcasms could produce upon the minds of the mass of the community, he might as well have gone back to La Source or the neighbourhood of Paris, which Mde. la Marquise would naturally have preferred. But he happened to send a letter to the *Country Gentleman*, complaining of the insolence of Robin the coachman to his friend, Caleb D'Anvers. The pith was fresh and the point keen, and it attracted so much attention among politicians that during the autumn he put off his dignity

at times, and tried in various ways how he could speak for a purpose in the diction of the multitude. Wyndham and Pope encouraged the idea of literary Tribuneship, and by Christmas a polished gridiron was made ready: and Caleb D'Anvers undertook to roast within an inch of their lives the reputations of all the Whigs in power.

There appeared an advertisement of an invention likely to be of great use to Statesmen. "Invented and sold by Solomon Porch, at the sign of the Great Chair, in Westminster, the true political perspective, which increases or diminishes any object at pleasure. This instrument, it was hoped, might be of great use in all public affairs, it being made large enough for several hundred persons to look through at once. By turning one end of it, dangers would be magnified and seen imminent; by turning the other, debts would be lessened and removed to a greater distance. Very useful at sea; by its multiplying quality it could, if thought necessary, make two or three small ships appear like a large fleet. Spectacles might also be had for the true reading any Treaty, Memorial, Foreign or English News, or any Public Paper whatsoever."[1]

In the sixteenth number appeared the vision of Camelick, in which an Oriental Court is depicted as trodden down by a usurping Minister, "dressed in a plain habit, with a purse of gold in his hand. He threw himself forward into the room in a bluff and ruffianly manner. A smile, or rather a sneer, sat on his countenance. His face was bronzed over with a glare of confidence. An arch malignity leered in his eye.

"They no sooner saw him, but they turned from the canopy and fell prostrate before him. He trod over their backs without any ceremony, and marched directly up to the throne. He took out his gold in handfuls and scattered it among the assembly. While the greater part were scrambling for the pieces he seized upon the sacred parchment itself and rumpled it into his pocket. The people began to murmur. He threw more gold, and they were pacified. When his purse became empty he dropped it, and dropped with it to the ground. The radiant volume again shone out and resumed its place above the throne. The throne, which had been darkened all this time, was now filled with the effulgence of the glory which darted

[1] 6th January, 1727.

from it. Heaven and earth resounded with, liberty, liberty, and the heart of the King was glad within him."[1]

The seventeenth number of the *Craftsman* spoke in still plainer language. It compared the Christian with the Mahommedan religion, to the disparagement of the former, inasmuch as the Christian faith, which was founded in peace, now sought to dominate the world by war, while the Mahommedan creed was sustained in toleration, though first propagated in blood. It likened the mutations of religion to those of party, whose opinions were continually undergoing a flux, and never long remained in the same condition; and finally, it said that the time had come to cast off the delusions of party, and to be no longer satisfied with names instead of things. Let them remember that liberty was the same blessing, whether dispensed under Whig or Tory Administration, and that arbitrary power was equally pernicious by whatsoever hands it was imposed; but though the evil was equally mischievous by whomsoever obtruded on them, it received some aggravation when it was introduced under the guise and by the pretended champions of liberty, because their understandings were insulted and they were treated at the same time like children and slaves.[2]

The forbearance of Government gave way, and Secretaries' warrants were issued for the arrest of Mr. Amhurst, Mr. Francklin, and other persons supposed to be concerned in the production of the Journal.

A week later, the *Craftsman* appeared with the motto "*Novo splendore resurgit*," and feigned to refute the charge that had been made against it, of slandering the Government by irony and innuendo. When a debauchee was said to be temperate and a corrupt Minister extolled for his disinterested love of country, the irony was apparent; but where would be the satire in calling Lucretia chaste, Cæsar valiant, or Cato just? The world would laugh at such folly and impotence. Therefore, it could not be the *Craftsman's* design in his preceding papers to asperse the existing Administration in an ironical manner, by comparing them with characters of which they were a living and exemplary confutation. He admitted having, in the bitterness of his heart, inveighed against ambitious corrupt

[1] 27th January, 1727.
[2] 30th January, 1727.

Statesmen, tyrannical officers, and treacherous guardians of public liberty; against stock-jobbers, plunderers, and engrossers; against men who had too much cunning in office, and men who had too little; against State harpies and political blunderers. But could anyone call this a libel against the Ministry, who were all just stewards, gracious magistrates, uncorrupt administrators of public money, endued with a proper mixture of the serpent and the innocence of the dove, and in every way the opposite of those he had endeavoured to expose? The *Craftsman* assured his readers that so long as the liberty of the Press flourished, so long as a printer and bookseller could be found who was not to be intimidated from proceeding in the undertaking; so long as the Habeas Corpus Act remained unrepealed or suspended, he would persevere in the task to its accomplishment; and if his subtleties of style were misconstrued by State lawyers, and he was compelled to suffer on account of their reading his words in another light to that intended, he was prepared to close the long evening of his dark and laborious life a sacrifice to the resentments of power, pride, and ambition.[1]

Provoked out of patience, the Cabinet resolved to stamp out their assailant, and a prosecution was ordered at the suit of the Crown, but for a season it was allowed to drop.

Not content with his contributions to Journalism, Bolingbroke amused the world with ironical papers, under the name of Occasional Writer, in which he affected egregious concern for the safety of Sir Robert; and, by way of the best service he could render him, recounted all the most malignant and vile insinuations which he said bad men were continually flinging up in the air against the great man. Of course, *he* did not believe a word of them, and he saw that, in times so torpid, the head of the Government thought himself safe in treating aspersions with contempt; but he ought to beware, for the present tranquillity was the surest portent of a storm, and when it came, his creatures and flatterers would be sure to vanish like spirits at the dawn of day. This inveterate species of vilipending was intended to provoke the holders of Executive power into reply, if they were able; or to resistance in the forms of law.

It has been said that Bolingbroke sometimes imagined that,

[1] *Craftsman*, 7th February, 1727.

like the second Lord Sunderland, he might one day find his way back to Court in spite of the *Chevaux de frise* of antipathy that surrounded it for his exclusion, and a story was told by Lady Betty Murray that Bolingbroke reckoned on the Duchess of Kendal being a second time his friend, and that he had actually been privately received in the closet, and expected to be one day Minister again. Colonel Churchill was employed to make Walpole aware of the rumour. In reply, "he bestowed some fitting language on her Grace, and said she would at any time have sold her influence with the King for a shilling advance to the best bidder." On a subsequent occasion, his trusted chaplain, Etough, excused himself for having ventured to ask some questions, when Sir Robert entered fully into the affair. St. John, he said, had such a propensity for lying that he could not forbear when there was no occasion. "He had reason to boast of his prospects and hopes, as he had the entire and absolute interest of the Duchess. He was explicit in telling the part she had in his return to England, and said that eleven thousand pounds had been handed by one of the Chetwynds to her daughter, Lady Walsingham."

Half-a-million spent on secret service abroad had furnished elaborate details of all the plans on paper for the capture of Gibraltar and the restoration of the Stuarts. Townshend was doubtless in earnest, and Zingendorff confident of being able to beguile the Czarina into joining the confederacy; while the Pretender wasted at Rome what scant resources remained to him in quarrels with his wife and confidence misplaced in his advisers, Hay and Murray, who were more than suspected of being in the pay of Whitehall. But having got all the extra supplies requisite to repel projects of invasion, Parliament was dissolved, and George I. was once more suffered to set out on his usual visit to his Electoral dominions. Hardly had he reached Osnaburg, when death suddenly terminated his uneventful reign. When the express from Townshend reached London, Walpole was at dinner. He wrote on the instant, summoning the Chancellor to meet him at the Lord President's without delay; but before they met, he had himself set out for Richmond to render homage to the new Sovereign, who, indulging in his usual siesta, could hardly be at first made to understand the cause of the intrusion. Walpole knelt to kiss

his hand, and asked whom his Majesty desired to draw the announcement of his accession to be laid before the Privy Council.

"Compton," was the sole reply; and the Minister departed on his unanticipated mission. Sir Spencer Compton was a younger son of Lord Northampton, and, though a man of moderate parts, had been early brought into the conduct of affairs. For a time he was Treasurer of the Prince's Household; and more recently Walpole, with an eye to possible contingencies, nominated him Speaker of the House of Commons, where his look of gravity and methodical ways of business were deemed indications of presidential wisdom. In 1722, he was likewise made Paymaster-General and Treasurer of Chelsea Hospital.

The salary of Speaker had not then been fixed upon a scale which sufficed to support the dignity of the office, and it was customary to add some other appointment whose duties were not deemed incompatible with those of the Chair. Lenthall, Trevor, and Onslow had in turn been at the same time Presidents of the Commons and servants of the Crown, and in Ireland it was customary for the Speaker of the House to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. At fault how the task should be performed which had thus been unexpectedly cast upon him, Compton readily resigned it to the Minister whom his self-importance would willingly have superseded without scruple. He was probably as yet unaware that George II. contemplated naming him for his chief adviser, for if the King agreed in nothing else, with his father he shared his suppressed dislike of the statesmen with whose domination he had been forced to comply. Sir Spencer was described by one who knew him well as "a plodding, heavy fellow, with great application, but no talents; more concerned for the manner and form in which a thing was to be done than about the propriety or expediency of the thing itself; and as he was calculated for a subaltern rather than a commander, he was much more fitted for a clerk to a Minister than for a Minister to a King. His only pleasures were money and eating, his only knowledge forms and precedents, and his only insinuation bows and smiles."[1] He and Walpole went straight to Devonshire House. The Duke, though an invalid, did not

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs."

shrink from taking part in consultation, and upon the whole he was, perhaps, the safest man to be consulted; for individually he wanted nothing, had no enemies; and in the firm establishment of the future Government had a greater stake than any of those who sought to benefit by it. It was his duty, as President of the Council, to make the necessary arrangements for the formalities of the occasion, and in the brief interval that must elapse before the new Monarch took upon him ostensibly executive functions, he might seem to have been without responsible advisers. The morrow came, and with it the difficulties began to break in upon the Sovereign of forming an Administration strong enough to stand of any but the old materials. Frequent conferences took place at Devonshire House to consider the course to be adopted. At these gatherings Walpole seemed more gloomy than the rest. He had built much on the friendship of the Princess of Wales, for the sake of whose esteem he had gone the length of slighting the reigning beauty of Leicester House, Lady Suffolk; while Argyll, Carteret, and Compton took just the opposite course, in making their suit to her.[1] As hours rolled by without any decisive indication of what the new order of things official was to be, Sir Robert seemed to think he had committed a mistake, and that not even his offer to obtain from Parliament £20,000 a-year more than Compton promised the Queen as separate settlement would avail to avert his supersession. But her Majesty, who had her own predilections to gratify, had not deserted him. It was her way not to let her husband know how much she ruled him, or to suffer him to suspect how inveterately she hated those who drew him constantly from her side. Power was a thing too precious in her eyes to be exposed to common view, or to the danger of mutilation by the envious or resentful. It is doubtful even how far Walpole knew how she worked for his reappointment. But though his spirit fluctuated, and he was, or seemed to be, at times depressed, he rated justly the comparative strength of parties, and in the main acted on the belief that the combination of great families, of whom he was diligently making himself the instrument and mouthpiece, would, if displaced, speedily reassert their predominance. He bade his friend Sir William Yonge, whom the Prince had treated with undisguised aversion

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs."

and contempt, to beware what he said should they find themselves in Opposition, for he might depend on it they would be in office soon again. As they drove by Compton's house, he told his companion to mark the crowd who flocked to pay their compliments, while his door was forsaken; but he added, significantly, "To-morrow the scene will be changed: that house will be deserted, and mine will be more frequented than ever." Meanwhile Townshend had promptly followed his messenger from Osnaburg to present his gratulations to Royalty in person, and he awaited anxiously an express from Paris that should tell how the news had been received.[1] Was a new Administration possible? For several days Compton's near-sighted vanity fancied it was. In private Carteret did not disguise weariness of vice-regal banishment. He would be only too glad to get back to European politics and a Foreign Secretaryship of State. Pulteney was ready to join, for he longed for a share in the lead of the Commons, and for equality at least with the faithless friend by whom he had stood in time of need, and who had cajoled him into humiliating forbearance, only that he might more effectually cheat him of Cabinet rank. But would Walpole's unmitigable selfishness conceal this from any fellow commoner capable of being his substitute, in Council or in debate? Compton naturally looked to any and all who would help to force the door they could not by knocking or serenading open. Many efficient but undemonstrative holders of office would be sure to attorn to whomsoever grasped the reins, and, as was seen in 1717, would let old chiefs go without them. There were beside not a few ambitious men of ability in Parliament, despairing hitherto of advancement, who might be relied on to support a change of hands, and who felt that without it all their efforts to win distinction in literature or legislation would gain for them only transient popularity and permanent neglect. Vernon, Cadogan, and Molesworth were dead, but the son of the last, though more of a soldier than a politician, had a record, an estate, and a seat in the Irish House of Peers. He had been aide-de-camp to Marlborough at Ramillies, where he saved the life of his chief by risking his own, and by him had been raised to the highest rank in his profession. Who could tell that he might not, like his father, take a seat at Westminster for one of

[1] Townshend to H. Walpole, at Paris, 24th June, 1727.

the boroughs to let, and make one of Carteret's garrison to defend the old political flag of Blenheim? Distinction out of office was danger to those who were in. So it proved in his case, for he became not long after Commander in Ireland.

When the tidings reached Paris of the King's unexpected death, Horace Walpole hastened to communicate it to M. Fleury, whom it concerned deeply as well as himself. In a long interview the Cardinal satisfied him that there was no ground for the rumour sure to be put about by the Jacobites that he would support a change of Administration in England. The question with both naturally was how was such a change to be averted and their first consultation ended without either venturing to suggest a practical solution. Returning from Versailles late at night, Horace Walpole was overtaken by a letter from his Eminence urging him to go forthwith to London, assure his friends and the new King of what they might rely upon in France, and dispel any misapprehension of apparent acquiescence on his part in some things that had recently filled him with doubt. Under ordinary circumstances, the Envoy would not have presumed to quit his post without previous leave. But the occasion was critical and time pressed. Acting on Fleury's advice, Horace set out forthwith for England, and, hiring a fishing boat to take him across the Channel, reached London while the Ministerial crisis still continued. An audience was at first refused him, and when subsequently granted to present his important communication from Versailles, he felt it indispensable to ask pardon for his breach of established usage, and to implore his Majesty to weigh, without prejudice for any fault he might have committed, the contents of the Cardinal's letter. The King did not conceal his surprise and disapproval, but something in Fleury's letter took the fancy of the new Sovereign. He entered into many inquiries as to the state of the French Court, and gradually settled into an evident feeling of satisfaction. The Queen, apprised of what had transpired, had the tact to suggest a letter to Fleury in his Majesty's own hand, as a master stroke of spontaneous wisdom, while as yet he was without a Minister, and the incident was made instrumental in turning the wavering scale.

George II. wrote:—"MY COUSIN,—The obliging manner in which you expressed your wish that my Ambassador Walpole

should instantly depart to give the most positive assurances of the intention of my good brother, the most Christian King, to cultivate that union which is so happily established between the two crowns, as well as his desire to perfect the great work of a general pacification, and the strong expression you have used in your letter to the said Ambassador to testify your zeal for the public good, and the particular interest you take in every thing which regards my government, have so moved me that I would not defer showing how much I am sensible of it and of acquainting you of my decided resolution to pursue the same wise and fair measures which have placed affairs in their present happy situation, and to draw closer the bonds of friendship which unite me to his Most Christian Majesty.

"I with pleasure embrace this opportunity to testify my high sense of your merit, my reliance in your sincerity, and the good will with which I am,

"My cousin,

"Your affectionate cousin,

"GEORGE REX."

Had a Ministry been in existence with the authority and responsibility of a Cabinet, the letter would not have been written, or if written would not have been forwarded by the Secretary of State. But Townshend held office at the time only till the new Administration might be formed; who should be its members nobody could tell. Perfunctorily he transmitted the Royal autograph to Robinson, acting as Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, for presentation to the Cardinal, with what degree of acquiescence on the part of Sir R. Walpole does not appear. The countenance of Fleury as he read the unlooked-for letter bespoke his surprise and gratification, but he uttered not a word, though effusive in written acknowledgments. For several mornings Compton was obliged to take the Chair at Westminster, while Walpole was in early attendance at St. James's to answer questions, explain difficulties, and make himself generally useful. In the afternoon the Speaker arrived and had his audience. After an interval, Sir Robert screwed up his courage to the daring point of gently hinting that he might now be permitted to retire. This, as no doubt he expected, fluttered the irresolute confidants of Royalty. The Civil List had still to be settled, and to risk its proposal with the great financier out of

employment would hardly be safe. He must stay on at all events till that matter was concluded, and if he were to bring it forward he must be consulted on each item. It would have been strange if he had thrown away his opportunity. In the scheme suggested by Compton the Queen was to have £60,000 a-year. Walpole insisted that less than £100,000 would not suffice. Her Majesty was not likely to forget this delicate attention, and opportunities daily occurred for improving the favourable impression made by her munificent admirer.

Meantime Caroline was warily drawing the mind of George II. to the conviction that the late Treasurer of his household was not strong enough to be the future Treasurer of the Kingdom. She had long inculcated the doctrine that resentment was a pleasure which Royalty was bound to deny itself whenever its interests were likely to be jeopardised by its gratification. The King could afford to bide his time, and he was bound to put a bridle on his enmities and aversions for the sake of strengthening his power. Her superior understanding enabled her to comprehend more clearly than his how infirm was still the hold which the new dynasty had upon the feelings of the nation, and how dangerous would be the experiment of a total change of hands. Lord Berkeley was indeed too odious to be retained at the Admiralty ; and the Chetwynds, who had among them several snug posts, might be removed without anybody caring but themselves. In the first exuberance of monarchic joy, Lord Malpas, the son-in-law of Walpole, was dismissed, and his favourite subordinate at the Treasury, Sir William Yonge, had early notice of dismissal. But when it came to the point whether the great Whig financier himself should be displaced, the Queen did not fail to urge that his great experience and approved abilities would certainly enable him to serve the King better than any other person ; and that his having made a fortune already would make him less solicitous about his own interest, and more at liberty to mind the King's than any that could succeed him. Prudence, rather than personal liking, seems to have actuated the Queen. Originally she had no partiality for Walpole, and he was well aware that the coarse epithets which he had permitted himself to apply to her as Princess had been duly retailed at Leicester House and were not forgotten there. But when the opportunity came for making reparation Sir Robert was not the man to

neglect it; and her Vice-Chamberlain believed that past errors were effaced by his timely offer to make her jointure double what had ever been given to a Queen of England, and to make her establishment £20,000 more than Compton proposed, who thought she might be content with the sum which Catherine of Portugal had as the Consort of Charles II. The propitiated Princess sent him word that "the fat —— had forgiven him."

When at Leicester House, Lady Walpole was unable to make her way towards her Majesty by reason of the press. She was addressed by Queen Caroline as a friend about whom she could not be mistaken. The throng wonderingly made way for her, as they had not been wont to do; and when retiring, as she told her favourite son, "she might have walked upon their heads." A few days later all thoughts of an Administrative change were given up; and Ministers resumed their former places; Compton being made a Peer, and subsequently a member of the Cabinet. The Duke of Devonshire remained President of the Council, and Walpole, whom he had more than any other individual contributed to make what he was, told him it must be so. There were some things about which George II. was intractable. But he was shrewd enough to perceive that if he could not have his own way in forming a Ministry, he could sometimes exercise a veto with regard to particular appointments; and if he must submit, in common with the rest of the realm, to be ruled by a majority of the old families, it was still something to be able to keep in office a minority of the section that hated that which was in the ascendant.

At last the brothers-in-law (Townshend and Newcastle) kissed hands as joint Secretaries of State; Berkeley was, of course, removed from the Admiralty, which was offered to Orford, but declined on account of advancing age and enfeebled health, and it was then given to Byng, the victor of Syracuse, created Lord Torrington, while his son was made Treasurer of the Navy.

One of the first acts of George II. was to continue Lord Scarborough in the office of Master of the Horse, the duties of which he had hitherto rendered him while Prince, and he had a seat in the Cabinet, which he retained during his life. He was a man of sense and ability, effective as a speaker in debate, and as well qualified by his sound judgment to be consulted in affairs of moment as by his discrimination and tact to be consulted in

matters of delicacy. There is little trace, however, of his having ever exercised much influence. He disliked intrigue, and was highly sensitive as to the imputation of want of candour and consistency, in a degree approaching to eccentricity; but he had long been a favourite at Leicester House, and was welcomed as a useful and honourable addition to the Ministry.

When it was proposed to make Charles Stanhope, elder brother of the Earl of Harrington, one of the junior Lords, his Majesty indignantly refused, and not unreasonably showed that he regarded the proposition as little less than an insult. Nothing indicates, indeed, more clearly the true condition of things as they then existed, and the spirit of domination which animated the monopolists of power, than the indecency of such a proposal.

It had been hard times for some who called themselves Statesmen and rulers to know how to poise between father and son. The enmity between them was such that few had the wit or the pluck to abstain from openly taking one or other side. Which was the wiser course puzzled the least scrupulous and most astute. Could Court politicians have known that the First George would die in a fit at the end of twelve years' reign, he would of course have had but a minority in his favour. But how could anybody dream of his making way for the Second George so soon? How could the most loyal believer in the statutable succession feel sure that the Prince would ever come to the throne? There were some even so devoted to the *status quo*, and so contented with the joint queenship of the Duchess of Kendal and the Countess of Darlington, that they persuaded themselves their best game lay in getting rid of the distractions of Leicester House and its pretensions altogether: and to that end they formed the creditable design of making away with the Prince of Wales, and carrying him off to America, whence he should never be heard of more.

Among the late King's papers the original proposal in the handwriting of Charles Stanhope, was found by the new Sovereign. Nevertheless, the First Lord of the Treasury did not scruple to urge more than once the propriety of bringing his friend into the Government; and it was not without difficulty he could be induced to yield the point. The scheme was actually submitted by Berkeley, when First Lord of the Admiralty, to the

King.[1] To smother scandal, however, and not hopelessly to alienate many votes in Parliament, Berkeley was made Keeper of the Forest of Dean, and Constable of St. Brianel's Castle, "Vice-Admiral of Great Britain, and Lieutenant of the Navies and Seas of this Kingdom."

George I. hated his son, and never forgave his unhappy wife for her ill-fated attachment to Königsmark; but he was not as bad as some of those about him. He kept the paper in a secret cabinet till his death, and showed no resentment against the authors of the nefarious proposal, while he would give it no encouragement. The conspirators were not ashamed to claim positions of honour and profit from their intended victim, and the comprehensive policy of Walpole led him, in one instance at least, to back their suit. The Duke of Grafton retained the Gold Key of Chamberlain; Godolphin remained Groom of the Stole; Dorset, Lord Steward; Argyll, Master-General of the Ordnance; Henry Pelham, Secretary-at-War; the Post Office was left in the hands jointly of Carteret's brother and Mr. Harrison, M.P. for Hertford, whose daughter was married to Townshend's eldest son, and Methuen continued to be Treasurer of the Household.

No one thought of proposing a lesser Civil List than had been granted in the former reign; but the revenues set apart for the purpose had gradually come to yield more by £130,000 a-year than had been reckoned on; and the re-established Minister moved in Supply that the augmented sum be given to the King for life.[2] On a subsequent day he made good his offer to the Queen, by moving that in case she survived his Majesty she should have a jointure of £100,000 a-year.

Shippen reviewed the system of expenditure recently pursued, and the great sums voted for secret service money, and under other heads of which no account had ever been rendered to Parliament. "They could not wonder that the world was free in its censures since none of these sums had been accounted for, and as they had been employed in services not fit to be owned. None but those who were in the secret, and who had the disposal of them, could refute the reflections that were made without

[1] Lord Hervey, who had seen the original, quotes the following words:—"*Il est vrai l'est votre fils, mais le Fils de Dieu Même a été sacrifié pour le salut de genre humain.*"—"Memoirs."

[2] Com. Journal, 3rd January, 1727.

doors, not only on the Ministry, but even on both Houses of Parliament: he must say no more. But he professed a wish that Time, the great discoverer of hidden truths and concealed iniquities, might produce a list of all such, if any there were, who had been perverted from their public duty by private pensions, and who had been made slaves, and the corrupt instruments of a profuse and vainglorious Administration. He moved that no more than £700,000 should be settled, but as he was not seconded the original motion passed without a division. Somerset House and Richmond Lodge were settled on the Queen for life. The King induced Walpole to undertake the business in the Commons, telling him that the better his condition was, the better it would be for his own, and that it would be a benefit to him for life. Sir Robert agreed, and though warned that it was meant by his rivals to throw him over when he had earned unpopularity by carrying such an exorbitant Civil List, he readily took the risk of odium for the sake of present power.

Nobody could honestly say that the new establishment was not excessive; yet nobody but Shippen opposed it. The more they added to the splendour of the Court, and the more numerous and well paid its offices, the better it suited those by whom they might be filled.

George II. fondly cherished the belief that he could govern as well as reign, but luckily for him his Queen was equally desirous of political power, though, unlike her lord, she had the understanding to perceive that the less Royalty claimed openly the more it was likely to be allowed to have. Her devotion to him as a wife was complete; and her system of self-abnegation, whereby during many years she continued to lead him with "invisible reins"—(the only reins whereby the conceited and choleric little man could have been quietly or decorously led), involved sacrifices almost incredible.[1] She understood from the outset far better than he could be easily brought to comprehend where the real power of the Executive lay. Through the Minister, whose measures and whose wishes she might privately further or thwart by means of her undemonstrative but all prevailing influence with the King, Caroline hoped to exercise a considerable share of authority. Hence the intimate confidence she bestowed on the Minister and expected from him in return; and hence the

[1] See Hervey's "Memoirs" of 1735.

gradual growth of an intimacy and friendship the like of which is seldom recorded in history. Without openly contradicting her husband in anything, or questioning his antiquated notions of prerogative, she warily and wisely accustomed him after a little time to the Ministerial yoke, and brought him at length to draw quietly in constitutional harness.

Carteret believed, with many hitherto excluded from the inner circle of power, that the new reign would inaugurate a fusion of parties; and if Compton became the nominal head, Pulteney and himself might gradually become the legislative hands of Government. But after it became evident that Walpole and his confederates had triumphed, he resigned himself once more to banishment to Ireland, for six months in the year, for the sake of sitting in Council during the remainder.

The King, finding it difficult to satisfy all the demands upon him, desired to have the disposal, without Ministerial advice, of Church patronage, and told the Chancellor that he expected to nominate to all benefices and prebendaries theretofore filled by his lordship. The keeper of his conscience felt himself bound to tell him that this was a right appertaining to the office, not only by immemorial usage, but expressly declared to belong to it by a recent statute; and with all due submission, he hoped his Majesty "would not put things out of their ancient course." George II. said Cowper told him that in his first Chancellorship, he had laid before the Queen a list of all persons whom he recommended to benefices, that she might be satisfied they were good Churchmen.[1] This is confirmed by an entry in Cowper's diary in 1705 noting that he had leave to bestow livings of £40 and under, without consulting Queen Anne. The Chancellor's remonstrances prevailed, and he was suffered to retain undisturbed what still continued to be called the Crown Livings.

Bishop Hoadly lost no time in persuading the new Queen to exercise her influence in ecclesiastical appointments. The diocese of Ferns was vacant, and at her instance his younger brother was sent over to fill that see. He was soon after made Metropolitan, and eventually Primate.

Carteret still lingered near the seat of power, where he probably felt he could exercise more influence, even in Irish affairs, than at Dublin. He contrived to baffle occasionally recommen-

[1] "Notes by Lord King on Domestic and Foreign Affairs," p. 47.

dations at the Castle; but a more difficult and delicate task was the revision of the Irish Privy Council, rendered necessary at the commencement of the new reign. Chief Justice Whitshed sank under the weight of obloquy he had incurred by his conduct on the Bench, and pressure was exerted to offer his place to some trustworthy member of the English Bar. It was said to be more than ever necessary that two at least out of the three Chief Judges should not be natives of the subject realm, because in the Privy Council there were more Irish country gentlemen than there need be. Whenever anything of importance was transacting, "the best to be hoped for from a native was that he would stay away."[1] The Lord-Lieutenant failed in Cabinet to efface the sinister impression thus made; and Reynolds, of the Inner Temple, was accordingly made Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

The Primate was seldom seen in the northern province, except during triennial visitations. The Archiepiscopal palace, so called, was at Drogheda; but Boulter lived in Dublin, where his engrossing occupations lay, as a member of the Executive, and of over-ruler in Parliament when the Secretary of State disapproved or distrusted measures of lenity or favour conceded by the Lord-Lieutenant. A Bill to which Carteret had promised his assent had passed the Commons, and would have been adopted by the Peers, restoring to Lord Clanricarde large estates forfeited in the last civil war. The family had since conformed to the Established Church, and ceased to be an object of Government misgiving; but he was viewed with jealousy by the Prelate. The Upper Chamber were persuaded by Boulter to vote an Address to the Crown, setting forth the dangerous consequences of reversing forfeitures; and the Bill of Restoration was lost.[2]

When a bishop fell ill his Grace forthwith opened beforehand negotiations for filling up the see, and anticipated all applications that might possibly be made to Ministers in favour of anyone not likely to act in concert with him in politics. Archbishop King was reported as at the point of death, and Carteret was duly reminded of the importance of placing an English bishop in the see of Dublin. "A native of Ireland, whatever his behaviour had been, or his promises might be, once in that

[1] Boulter to Newcastle, 26th August, 1727.

[2] Irish Lords' Journals.

station, would undoubtedly put himself at the head of the Irish interest, in the Church at least, and would naturally carry with him Trinity College and most of the clergy. There might be a good deal of murmuring at the appointment of an Englishman, but though there should be, he thought it a post of that consequence to be worth filling aright."[1] About the same time he poured his inmost thoughts into the confidential ear of Secretary Newcastle. As there were then "but nine English bishops (out of twenty-two) on the Irish bench, it would be for his Majesty's service to fill the Archbishopric of Cashel from England."

The anomaly of the chief estates and employments in the poorer Kingdom being held by nobles and citizens of the richer realm was intensified by the residence of many in England, whither they were irresistibly drawn by the superior openings to political and social ambition. Swift had pressed on his viceregal friend the justice and expediency of a discriminating property tax, whereby these various classes of absentees should be made to bear a greater proportion of local burthens than those who remained at home; and Carteret recognised the present equity and ultimate policy of such a measure.

In opening the Session, Carteret observed that from the prevalence of distress the revenue had fallen short, and the public debt was seriously increased. A suggestion for additional taxes on articles of luxury was not rejected by the Commons; but if the Irish Parliament was often wanting in spirit, it sometimes was impelled by a sense of social justice to acts of patriotism. The absenteeism of official sinecurists was no new thing; but when famine was sore in the land, and the surplus of resident incomes usually spent in gaiety or show was eaten up by the hungry multitude, nobles and gentry, prelates and fox-hunters, Tories and Whigs concurred in imposing a tax of four shillings in the pound on all salaries, employments, places, and pensions of those who did not reside six months in the year in the Kingdom. But the provision was added when the heads of the Bill were sent over to Whitehall, "save when exempted under the Sign Manual."

For some time a desire had been shown for emigration, from four to five thousand persons of various ranks quitting Ireland for the colonies during the summer of 1728. They said they

[1] To Carteret, 9th February, 1727.

were driven by oppression and want of employment, there being comparatively but little tillage or profitable trade. To check the movement the law officers were set to look up old statutes forbidding the export of money except by merchants, and it was hoped that an order in Council might be of use prohibiting the export of corn. In the following spring the infatuation, as it was called by the authorities, spread specially in Ulster, seven ships being reported in the harbour of Belfast to take away intending emigrants. Three bad harvests had rendered provisions unusually dear, and subscriptions to mitigate the distress were of little avail.

Boulter confessed to his patron and prompter their policy was not successful with any class of the community, either high or low. From Ulster, the special object *ex-officio* of his care, more than three thousand discontented persons of the working class had been seduced, he said, by American agents to emigrate, the worst of it being that all of them were Protestants.[1] Carteret regretted the efflux he could not stay, and would fain have had the Presbyterian ministers dissuade the younger members of their flocks from venturous exile at the beckoning or bidding of speculators in the transfer of labour of whom they knew nothing, and from whom they could exact no satisfaction if deceived. But the depression of trade by Acts of Parliament, the demoralisation caused by sectarian monopoly, and the resentment arising from the spectacle of too many offices of trust and profit in the gift of the Government being bestowed on strangers, continued to stimulate the outward flow of energy and enterprise.

At the instance of Boulter, instructions were sent to Carteret to have the supply of funds for the payment of interest on the debt voted for the life of the King or for twenty-one years. Great efforts were made to compass this project, and the independent portion of the Irish Commons feared it would be carried. The final debate, however, was kept up all night, and when at last they were about to divide at break of day, the member for New Ross, Colonel Tottenham, appeared in the ranks of Opposition, having ridden all night from Wexford in order to be in time. His vote turned the scale, and his likeness might long be seen in the print shops with the title of "Tottenham in his Boots."

[1] Boulter's "Letters," I., 260-262, 1728.

By way of inaugurating the legislation of the new reign, a draft scheme was sent on for adoption by the Privy Council at Whitehall, disqualifying professed converts from Catholicism for practising the law until after an interval of five years, and unless they took the oath of abjuration and bound themselves to bring up their children in the Anglican faith. The excuse was that a majority of both branches of the profession were said to be mere conformists, and that, if they were promoted on the claim of learning or merit, there might come to be a preponderance of Jacobites on the Judicial Bench.[1] This was one of the last additions to the penal code, said to have been ineffective for its malignant purpose from the facility with which it was evaded, and consequently among the first to become obsolete.

In public every man who wanted anything and sought to get it by making himself troublesome got uneasy about the domestic condition of the country, and the sad figure we cut in the eyes of Europe. Hampden, no longer in office, was always filled with sad thoughts as to our declining trade, and looking anxiously to see the sun of Britain's glory go down for ever. And it is curious to observe how essential a point of high breeding it was held to be never to laugh in a noble lord's or a rich commoner's face when he fell into this strain of observation. No one could tell when it might be his own case and when he would have need to put his hand on his heart and vow to God how much he would sacrifice for the sake of his country. But in private, to save time and misunderstanding, great frankness of speech was allowed. Thus we find Mr. Hampden, when weary of neglect by his party, telling Lady Suffolk, in order that she should repeat it, that unless he could obtain a pension without further delay, under the reigning family, he would very soon take service in some other,[2] meaning that of the Pretender.

All who were disappointed at the retention of the old Ministry and some who had been displaced, forthwith formed a combination against Walpole and Townshend, which speedily gathered strength and became so formidable that Sir Robert told the Chancellor that he sometimes wished to retire. The Opposition

[1] Boulter to Newcastle, 7th March, 1728.
[2] Letter to Lady Suffolk, 30th June, 1727.

included Carteret, Roxburgh, Pulteney, the Speaker, Compton, and all the discontented Whigs.[1]

The great-grandson of the celebrated leader in the Long Parliament was in 1716 named Teller of the Exchequer, and somewhat later Treasurer of the Navy. Like all the rest, he went deep in the speculation of the day, and when the crash came was obliged to own himself a defaulter to the extent of £80,000. For some time he struggled vainly to repair his ruined fortune, and kept his seat for Wendover, where his family had long been paramount. Walpole at last carried an Act which sequestrated his estate in Buckinghamshire to make good the loss the public had incurred through his malversation; and there are letters of his in the summer of 1727 begging for pecuniary assistance, offering the reversion of his seat to Government, and ascribing his frequent arrests since the dissolution to the ill will of Walpole, who would have him end his days in prison: and this while more than one of those who had profited largely by the South Sea Scheme "were favoured by the very man who had sworn his ruin."[2]

[1] Chancellor King's "Notes," p. 51.
[2] To Mrs. Howard, August, 1727.

CHAPTER XII.

WALPOLE AND TOWNSHEND.

1728–29.

Inner Cabinet—Pulteney in Opposition—Refusal of Titles by the King—Prince Frederick sent for—Walpole Chief Minister—Corrupt Practices Bill—Congress of Soissons—French Alliance Unbroken—Question of Gibraltar—Quarrel of Walpole and Townshend—Chesterfield Lord Steward—Duke of Dorset Viceroy—Townshend Resigned—Controversy in Prose and Verse—Origin of Pasquinades—Failure of Press Prosecutions—Relief from the Test Act.

WITHIN the Cabinet there existed a lesser circle of confidence, including the Secretaries of State, the Chancellor, the President of the Council, the Privy Seal and the First Lord of the Treasury.[1] Beyond these, matters of great moment were not at first made known. In November, 1727, a secret treaty was negotiated through Count Dehn with the Duke of Wolfenbuttel, to which the Great Seal was put without the cognisance of any other functionaries than those above named. The King's reluctance to trust the other Ministers with the knowledge of its contents is the reason assigned by Lord King for thus acting without his colleagues. That would probably have weighed but little with him, had he not felt that those who were consulted constituted the real power of the Government, and that the uncounted majority had no choice but to acquiesce whenever they should be made acquainted with the transaction. The "Select Lords," as the confidential minority are called by him, met frequently at Devonshire House or at the residence of Townshend, Walpole, or Godolphin. On particular points they took counsel with persons holding subordinate positions. Pelham, Secretary-at-War, was called on to give information and advice on questions relating to the army, Torrington and

[1] Chancellor King's "Notes," p. 50.

Sir C. Wager regarding the movements of the fleet, and Horace Walpole when diplomatic details were under consideration.[1] What Townshend or Sir R. Walpole might have thought at the time of the first epistle of King George II., their position was too equivocal to tempt them to avow. But the effect of the eccentric communication soon appeared. Fleury, in the presence of the new Foreign Minister, Chauvelin, declared that France was resolved to cultivate the good understanding theretofore existing between the two Governments. Chauvelin, though known to be a disciple of Torcy, could not be set aside because distasteful to a foreign Power; and the Jacobite spirit took comfort at having an enemy less in office.

The new Parliament gave Ministers a greater majority than before, and chose Arthur Onslow, whose father had been Speaker, to fill the Chair. When election returns were disputed by petition, and appeal in every case was to a party vote in the whole House, the manifest injustice by the neglect of fact and truth exceeded anything that had ever gone before. There was a string of cases so indefensible, says one who was in the thick of the fray, that people grew ashamed of pretending to talk of right and wrong, laughed at that for which they ought to have blushed, and declared that in elections they never considered the cause but the men.[2]

Such practices, however, grew prescriptive and gradually formed part and parcel of the common law of Parliament. The section of excluded Whigs led by Pulteney, and comprising Sandys, Winnington, Sir J. Barnard, Lyttelton, with several members of the House of Lords, coalesced thoroughly with Sir W. Wyndham and Shippen as leaders of the Tories in systematic opposition. Their talents in debate were more formidable than their numbers in division. To drive Walpole from power was, they contended, indispensable to good government and the welfare of the nation; but with majorities in both Houses, content at Court, a buoyant revenue and expanding trade, his lease of office seemed likely to be a long one. Against the employment of 12,000 Hessian troops and the application of the Sinking Fund from time to time to meet the varying exigencies of the Executive, continual protests were made; but the great master of finance traversed at will the intricacies of adverse calculation, and

[1] Chancellor King's "Notes," p. 50. [2] Hervey's "Memoirs," I., 102-3.

showed that their debt was not augmenting, but diminishing, and the maintenance of foreign troops in British pay was an economical expedient for keeping continental jealousies from taking fire. Within the Cabinet he was supreme, no one but Townshend venturing to gainsay or question what he thought fit to approve. No essential change of policy signalised the new reign. Pulteney pushed the Ministry harder than before, and many knowing men hinted their belief that Walpole went too far in his exercise of power, and that the bow ere long must break. Meanwhile, he managed, through the influence of the Queen, to reduce Church patronage to a system thoroughly organised for secular purposes.

George II. could not easily forget or forgive his disappointment at finding on his accession that the choice of a Cabinet lay not with him. He probably attributed his mortification chiefly to the strength of Walpole in Parliament and his indomitable will in Council; and he cherished, no doubt, in secret, intermittent hopes that one day he should be delivered from his Ministerial oppressor; and left free to resume, after the manner of his ancestors, the responsible privilege of selecting at will the materials of Executive Government. Meanwhile, he took minor opportunities to assert himself, to the annoyance and sometimes embarrassment of his Ministers, whose promise of a title or decoration he would hesitate to ratify, or whose scruple about asking Parliament for more money he would obdurately decline to regard. According to the custom at previous accessions to the throne, expectations had been held out of advancement and creations in the Peerage; but he insisted that the nobility were numerous enough; and though he at last consented to reward William Stanhope for his services at Madrid with the Earldom of Harrington, he repelled with reproach the attempt to obtain for his elder brother a similar dignity, or the first place at the Admiralty, which he truly said were more fittingly bestowed on Admiral Byng.

Charles Stanhope did not fail to make known his discontent. Townshend took pains to convince Poyntz that it was no fault of his or Walpole's; but the only wonder is how they could have urged the request; and his Majesty may be well excused for being unrelenting. "Sir Robert recommended him in the strongest manner, and espoused his interest with so much

warmth as to hazard the loss of his credit with the King. As to the peerage, I do not think that when Mr. Stanhope knows the true state of the case he will have any reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of his friends."

Two days before the prorogation Walpole told the King this would be a proper time to fulfil his intentions towards those whom he had promised to promote to the Peerage. His Majesty was much displeased, and said he was determined not to make any promotions of the kind. Sir Robert renewed his instances, but to no purpose. The next morning George II. told him, with some vehemence, that if he must make some new lords he was resolved only to make four. "My brother endeavoured to persuade him to add some with equal pretensions to those he named, as this would be much smaller than the creations usual at the beginning of a new reign. But he refused." [1]

George II. had a habit of asserting himself by affecting to veto fresh propositions when made for his adoption by Minister or Queen; but it was well understood that that was only his way, and in due time, when his fancied autocracy had been duly mined, it surrendered, and sometimes the concession was made to appear as though it were spontaneous on the part of his Majesty. Meantime Scarborough, feeling that he had no real influence as a Cabinet Minister, betook himself to Lumley. His reserve and abstraction became a source of pain to his friends; but the master of Houghton cared for none of these things. Monarchy had been obliged to accept the administrative yoke, and if he used the goad forbearingly, he not the less firmly held the reins. The Cabinet, for the most part, consisted of well-bred indolent men, with whom it would have bored him often to confer. The two exceptions were Townshend, on whose shoulders he had climbed in days gone by, and Newcastle, on whose submissive votes he intended to stand in days to come. In truth he was transferring his reliance from the elder to the younger Secretary of State, and their incompatibility of temper had already begun to appear.

From motives which it is difficult fully to comprehend, George II. had for some years deferred bringing his eldest son into England. The evils of a foreign education for him who seemed destined to fill one day the chief dignity in the State

[1] Townshend to Poyntz, 3rd June, 1728.—*MS.*

had already shown themselves conspicuously in the father and grandfather of the Prince; and it was natural that dissatisfaction should arise at what appeared to be an indefinite exclusion from his natural place at Court without the assignment of intelligible reasons. Ministers frequently suggested that Prince Frederick should be sent for; but finding no favourable response from either of his parents, and foreseeing that opposition would probably ere long turn the topic to account, they at length plainly told their Majesties that if the Prince's coming were longer delayed an Address from Parliament would certainly oblige his Majesty to send for him.

Frederick was accordingly received by his Royal parents,[1] and in due time an establishment was formed for him at Leicester House, where he too easily fell into the pleasures and occupations in which his companions delighted. The unfortunate prejudice against him that speedily betrayed itself on the part of his father may have accounted in some measure for dissimilar tastes and tendencies; and too certainly for the reciprocal distrust manifested by him. His father from the first took his mother's side, and ere long it was an open secret that the Prince of Wales was become an object of Royal aversion. His expenditure quickly exceeded his limited allowance, and he was not long before he had become entangled in usurious debt.

Sir Robert freely owned to those he trusted his obligations to Queen Caroline. He told the Chancellor that her political capacity for Government transcended that of every other woman; and it was said that, during many years, he committed himself to no serious enterprise or project without paying her the deference of previously consulting her.

Experience showed Walpole the wisdom of consulting his best friend about any measure he wished to propose, and when it seemed difficult or doubtful, not to name it to the King until warned, confidentially, that no Royal objection waylaid its success. Thus assured, he would sometimes but open the subject in a contemplative tone, and hear, with well-feigned admiration its prompt sagacity, his own suggestion propounded by his as if it had been born on the spot. It is even said that t edifying instances of the kind occurred when Caroline

[1] 3rd December, 1728.

herself was present, careful to take no part, by word or look, in the excogitation unless supplementarily asked for her opinion. Walpole's obvious ascendancy provoked strifes and envyings he took small pains to allay. All ambitions converged towards his undoing. Carteret, Roxburgh, Berkeley, Bolingbroke, Wyndham, Pulteney, and Speaker Compton, each and all regarded him as the chief obstacle in their way, and none of them were particularly nice in the means for its removal; but it is hardly accurate to describe them as confederates for his overthrow. In private, they may have sympathised and schemed with one another; but in Parliament they were unable to keep a united front, and Bolingbroke, who distrusted Pulteney, and who still thought Wyndham qualified to lead, remained himself without voice or vote as a peer. From the diary of Lord Chancellor King it has been inferred that the Cabinet at large were seldom called together to confer, or even to dine, because Walpole, who was given to the pleasures of the table, habitually invited those who best understood the specific questions on which he wished to be informed. Who can tell how many first impressions and incongruous opinions were thus safely permitted to evaporate, which, in a full meeting of the Cabinet, it might have been difficult to forget or to withdraw? His general hospitality was not confined to men of his own party. Savage, who met at Lord Tyrconnel's table many courtiers and politicians, formed no very high opinion of their character and conversation. Walpole's attainments, as disclosed in his after-dinner talk, struck him as somewhat small; the whole range of his ideas "appearing to be from obscenity to politics, and from politics to obscenity."[1] The tone of the Press was ruthless, that of the stage ribald, nor was the critic nice; what then must have been the licence that struck even him as foul?

A Bill was brought in to put down corrupt practices by stern penalties. Rich men who dared to ingratiate themselves with the corporation or burgesses of a town, in the hope of being chosen for Parliament, instead of the son or grandson of some neighbouring proprietor, were made liable to be unseated, to be disfranchised for life, and to be fined £500. The rigour of virtue could no further go. Not a word was said in the modic effort at purity about close or rotten boroughs.

[1] Johnson's "Life of Savage."

castle continued to extend his investments in seats till the limits of his fortune were overpast and he was obliged to mortgage the rental of more than one of his possessions; but he thought office and patronage worth the money, and the Court and his colleagues thought the votes he had on hire worth the price of his shortcomings. Every year the Pelham influence became better organised.

Discussion in Cabinet in 1727-8 seems to have chiefly turned on foreign affairs. Townshend had gradually become absorbed in measures for the preservation of Hanover from encroachment or attack. Before the close of the late reign the Emperor Charles sought to enlist in his support by specific treaties nearly all the minor Courts of Germany, as well as those of Prussia. If the menacing combination backed by Russia could, at the outbreak of war, occupy Brunswick, there was danger that the King's Electoral dominions would be overrun, and a way of resistless invasion opened into the Netherlands. Owing probably to the absence of colleagues in the Cabinet able and willing to sustain Walpole in checking the policy of Townshend, he fell into a habit and tone of exaggeration on the subject, highly acceptable to the new Sovereign, but suggestive of innumerable topics of complaint to Opposition. During the autumnal recess of 1727 the Secretary planned and executed a treaty with the Duke of Brunswick, whereby he hoped to regain some of his lost possessions by a promised subsidy of £25,000 a-year to pay a corps of five thousand men;[1] and the reputed designs of the Emperor, it was said, were thereby checked. It had, apparently, the effect of disheartening the Court of Spain; and little progress being made in the siege of Gibraltar, renewed hopes were subsequently confirmed of a general accommodation of difficulties. Townshend was not a little proud of his success in diplomacy, which more than ever was Hanoverian.

The death of George I. had been supposed at Madrid to involve a change of the English Ministers, if not of the reigning dynasty. Hopes revived of a combination with the Empire into which France might be allured, that would restore its lost importance to Spain and compel the restoration of Gibraltar and Minorca. The convention previously negotiated by William Stanhope, and which had been all but signed, was abruptly laid

[1] Signed at Wolfenbuttel 23rd November, 1727.

aside, and the old talk resumed at Court that the inviolability of the Peninsula must, in any treaty, be *sine quâ non*. With this intelligence, the reinstated Cabinet of England were troubled with vague misgivings, for some time laid aside, of the fidelity of France. A demand was made of £250,000 from Parliament for the secret service of the year. Opposition moved an Address to the Crown to know what the money was wanted for, and Ministers formulated a reply that in the over-clouded state of foreign affairs, it was idle to ask for a public account of what, if spent at all, must be spent clandestinely. Pulteney, Wyndham, Morpeth, and Shippen railed at such refusal to take the House into confidence; and vowed that it was by such means corrupt Ministers sought to perpetuate national burthens already oppressive; the more scandalous in a time of unbroken peace. Walpole dwelt on the dangers of war looming near, and painted in the darkest hues the thriftlessness of leaving their diplomacy shorthanded. While he was yet speaking, amid interruption and menace, a despatch was brought him from Whitehall conveying the welcome intelligence that the Court of Madrid had given way, that the Treaty of El Pardo was signed, and that points of difference, still outstanding, were referred to a Congress to be assembled at Soissons. With consummate art, he changed instantly his tone, and announced the reprieve of Government from its anxieties; thanked God there was once more hope of peace; and told the House to acknowledge the wisdom of the measures which had been theretofore taken to bring about a consummation so devoutly to be wished.[1] The House, delighted at being delivered from an actual perplexity, voted the money without a division. Nevertheless, uneasiness was caused by frequent representations, for the most part by casual observers, of the progress making in the restoration of the sea forts and harbour works at Dunkirk, whose total abolition had been guaranteed by the Treaty of Utrecht. Horace Walpole called the attention of Fleury to the facts of which there could be no dispute, and pointed out the irritation likely to arise in England. The Cardinal disclaimed all knowledge of the affair, and promised that nothing should be done contrary to the Treaty, and that if anything had been done it should be rectified.[2]

[1] 4th March, 1728.

[2] H. Walpole to Newcastle, 8th May, 1728.—*MS.*

Poyntz made a suggestion for settling the troublesome controversy about Gibraltar at the Congress, which chimed in exactly with Townshend's notions. But the Secretary reminded him of the violent and almost superstitious zeal which had of late prevailed among all parties in the Kingdom against any scheme for restitution on any terms whatever; and he was persuaded that the bare mention of a proposal which carried the most distant appearance of laying England under an obligation of ever parting with that place would be sufficient to put the whole nation in a flame. All that they could do to soften the King of Spain and appease the ill will the Spanish nation had conceived against us, was to consent to such proposals as might prevent the unlawful trade alleged by the Spaniards to be carried on by the South Sea Company.[1] A monopoly of the trade in negroes for the West Indies and the Spanish Main was as carefully defended by the Ministers of George II. as it had been matter of boast under those of Anne, and the social ethics of the time bear not a trace of compunction, philosophic or religious.

From the beginning of the century the practice had grown up of bringing into England negroes or half castes, who had been trained as domestic servants in the colonies; and by degrees it became a point of fashion to have one or more of them in wealthy establishments. Many of them learning to envy the lot of their fellow-servants, sought to assert their freedom, and were led to believe that if publicly baptised they could not be sent back to the places whence they came. Government were appealed to by some of their influential supporters to make an announcement decisive of the question; and the Attorney and Solicitor General, Yorke and Talbot, gave as their opinion that a slave by coming from the West Indies into Great Britain or Ireland, with or without his master, did not become free; and that the owner's right and property in him was not thereby determined or varied; finally, baptism did not bestow freedom on him or make any alteration in his temporal condition. They were also of opinion that the master might legally compel him to return again to the plantations. Absconding slaves were thenceforth commonly advertised for in the public journals, to be sold by auction,

[1] Townshend to Poyntz, 3rd June, 1728.—*MS.*

and frequently booked as cargo, to be delivered with other goods on arrival.

Ties of mutual confidence between Cardinal Fleury and the English Ministry did not slacken by change of times. Townshend never failed to impress on his envoys at Paris and Soissons the importance of contributing in every way to its continuance. To Poyntz he wrote: "As you know I have more confidence in you than in any man living, I cannot help giving, in the utmost secrecy, you the trouble and myself the comfort of opening my mind to you on the present situation of affairs. I agree perfectly with the Cardinal in what he says in his letters to Mr. Walpole as to our not being justified in not coming to a rupture (with Spain); and that no steps should be made by us till the arrival of the galleons. What grieves me is to see the Cardinal so averse to explaining himself in confidence. If he knew our situation here he would be convinced of the necessity there is of his acting this friendly part, and that the true interest of France requires it. He is mistaken if he thinks that the House of Commons is influenced by money to be thus unanimous in the supporting his Majesty in all that he has done. This zeal proceeds from the chief men in both Houses being convinced that the means hitherto taken are right; but though they have heartily concurred in what has been done hitherto, they are under the greatest anxiety at the uncertain state of our affairs, and will not be kept much longer in suspense. We shall raise £3,500,000 this year, which is above £1,500,000 more than our ordinary expense in time of peace; and if we are not enabled at least privately, to give assurances to men of weight in both Houses before they are prorogued, that there is a probability of an end to the present disturbances, and that the allies of Hanover have not taken measures to do themselves justice by force of arms, our credit and influence in this Parliament will be entirely lost." Poyntz was told to speak to Fleury as from himself on the danger of uncertainty continuing, lest Ministers should be compelled to cut down their estimates once more. He might show the despatch to him, or burn it, as he thought fit.[1] No progress was made in the dispute regarding Gibraltar. In 1727 Sandys, supported by Pulteney and Wyndham, had pressed for the production of the letter wherein George I. had offered to restore Gibraltar six years before, but during his

[1] To Poyntz, 21st February, 1729.—*MS.*

lifetime Government had always prevailed upon the House to abstain from enforcing the request. The question was still open and angry, and another King had arisen that knew not the exigencies of his father's time. The French Ambassador, M. de Broglie, assured his Government, that if pressed in Parliament, the Ministry must now yield; and rumours were industriously renewed that a change of hands was probable in England. The Spanish Plenipotentiary thereupon insisted on the surrender of the great fortress, and it became once more the symbol of conflict at Westminster. To appease the ferment, it was thought expedient to lay the Royal letter on the table. But strong disavowals were made by Ministers of the construction placed upon it, with repudiations of the alleged policy of their predecessors.[1] The Peers voted an Address, praying the King not to sanction any treaty giving up Gibraltar or Minorca, and this being in consonance with the desire of the Commons and the King, the Cabinet were once more at ease.

Relations between Townshend and Newcastle did not improve. From Hanover the Secretary acquainted Chesterfield in strict confidence, for his guidance at the Hague, and for himself alone, with certain critical passages in the pending negotiations, which he was expressly forbidden to make known either to the Pensionary or to Newcastle, or anybody else. He would think, no doubt, that the Council in England went on pretty fast, and were in more haste to form a fixed concert of operations than they would find their friends either in France or Holland prepared for.[2] The indications expressed of waning confidence in his ducal colleague is significant when taken in conjunction with their subsequent quarrel, although it is endorsed in Secretary Tilson's handwriting "Not sent." Townshend's first intention was modified by the receipt of a peremptory despatch from the Council in England by the pen of Newcastle to the Plenipotentiaries at Paris and Madrid, stating the danger that would be incurred if Spain were any longer permitted to trifle, and pointing to the necessity for specific resolutions by France in case of an expected rupture.[3] A more guarded communication was consequently sent to Chesterfield expressing the belief of Townshend that Spain would

[1] 18th March, 1729.

[2] Draft to Chesterfield, June, 1729.—*MS.*

[3] From Townshend, 20th June, 1729.—*MS.*

come to terms, and cynically noting the haste of his colleagues in England in arriving at the opposite conclusion. The young diplomatist, big with the importance of being made a confidant in a Cabinet difference, responded in terms of sympathy, and with protestations of entire reticence and devotion. The Dutch Ministers were not pressed inordinately by him to take sides in the expected European fray; and before Christmas Townshend and Fleury had the satisfaction of seeing it averted.

If the protracted conference of Soissons disappointed sanguine expectations, it at least enabled the Ministers of France and England to sow dissension between the Courts of Vienna and Madrid, and at length the latter began to listen to a project of a new alliance, offensive and defensive, between the maritime States of the West, the articles of which were signed at Seville on the 9th of November, 1729.

The liberation from risk and fear thus given to every branch of foreign and colonial trade was, in Walpole's view, a splendid purchase for German subsidies and the relinquishment of venturous enterprises in arms. But Townshend was not satisfied with the omission in the Treaty of solid compensation for injuries at sea and the specific renunciation of all claim to Gibraltar; and he would have been willing, in various ways, to keep open questions of difference with the Emperor, insensible to his kinsman's far-sighted fear, that in case of a reconciliation between the two Houses of Bourbon England would be left no ally but Austria capable of preserving the balance of power. Unacknowledged jealousy tended to widen the divergence beginning to be observable between the two Ministers. The death of Lady Townshend caused many comparative trifles to work in the same direction, and it took all the care and sagacity of her brother Horace to prevent political discussion from degenerating into personal wrangle.

Walpole, who had begun by leaning upon Townshend as his closest neighbour in Norfolk, and who, after his sister's marriage, had cultivated his friendship with more than political care, had come to regard habitually their strings of life as intertwined beyond the chance of separation. He had thrown up great office for Townshend's sake in 1717, and stipulated three years later for his restoration as an essential condition of his own. Despite the ordinary differences of opinion to which all earnest

and able men are liable, they had worked to the end of one reign and into the beginning of another in genuine and fruitful harmony. Sir Robert had gone so far as to declare, not only that there was no one capable of dealing with foreign affairs like Townshend, but that, in fact, the Government could not go on without him. The correspondence with foreign Courts lay entirely in his hands, and he so thoroughly satisfied the notions and prejudices of George II. regarding Continental affairs that we find draft after draft of despatches of the Secretary of State minuted by the King with expressions of unqualified assent and approval. Enclosing despatches of importance from Chesterfield with the draft of one from himself to the Minister at Paris (prepared before their receipt), he proposed to forward by post that night if his Majesty approved; it was returned at once with the note, "I approve entirely of this letter.—G.R."[1] Not only on points of Imperial *delicatesse*, but on matters touching most intimately the feeling and pride of the Royal Family, we find the same tone and style of communication. When a marriage was negotiating between the Prince Royal of Prussia and a daughter of England, Townshend had authority to indite a letter on the subject from Queen Caroline to the Queen of Prussia, and the draft was sent for their Majesties' approval, together with a despatch to H. Walpole and W. Stanhope at the Congress, and one to M. Dubourgay, in which the matrimonial alliance was mentioned. The minute of George II. ran thus: "I think that you have said everything that is possible in the letter you have writ to the plenipotentiaries. As to that to M. Dubourgay, I am yet so unsettled as to which of my two eldest daughters, that I must speak to you before I come to a determination which of the two should be sent (*sic*) to Berlin."[2]

Walpole disliked the drudgery of diplomatic correspondence, and was content with his undivided direction of domestic affairs. The Queen, acting as Regent, consulted him in everything, rarely seeking to question his discretion. But power is the most insidious of intoxicants, and the coarse nature of Walpole was not calculated to resist its seduction. He grew tetchy of Townshend's self-confidence in details implying a sort of absolutism in foreign affairs. Without retracting his oft-repeated confession

[1] 17th December, 1728.

[2] Townshend Correspondence.

of the Secretaries' departmental aptitude, he began to meddle, then to doubt, sometimes to demur, at last to object bluntly, and even to suggest alternatives, which Townshend's habit of deciding without discussion rendered difficult of adoption. There was no one strong enough in the Cabinet to essay the thankless task of fusing their jarring ideas. The King nearly always confirmed what the Secretary said, and the Queen what the Finance Minister pleaded for in preference. No change for a time was noticeable in the official relations between the brothers-in-law. But in 1729 the correspondence discloses the jealous susceptibility that was gradually becoming irrepressible. Serious differences in the closet arose regarding £115,000, which the King declared to be a deficiency in the payments on account of the Civil List.[1] The First Lord did his best in deprecating a demand which he knew would be unpopular, and feared would be injurious to the Treasury. There was in fact no deficiency; but, as a last resource, he offered to procure the amount in Committee of Supply under the semblance of an arrear; and Scrope, the Secretary of the Treasury, actually moved a vote of the sum in this fabulous form. The veil was too thin to blind, and a Secret Committee of Inquiry was moved by Opposition into the receipts of the Civil List. But in the second year of a new Parliament majorities are seldom factious in matters of finance; even popular constituencies might be relied on to forget their arithmetic by the time reckoning came round; and the invertebrate boroughs, whom a third of the House bestrode, were no more suspected of capacity to exact an account than the ghost on the Danish Castle wall. The amendment was rejected by 244 to 115, and the grant was acceded to without difficulty.

In the Upper House hard things were said by a protesting minority, whose taunts could not be stifled by Ministerial sneers at impenitent Jacobitism.

Townshend still maintained his position as Foreign Secretary, yet it daily became clearer that there was a want of accord between him and Walpole; and when he accompanied the King to Hanover, the official correspondence between him and Newcastle betrayed no little susceptibility on both sides; the Duke being the mouthpiece of the Cabinet generally, and Townshend,

[1] April, 1729.

assuming, in the name of the King, a tone which at times savoured almost of reprimand.[1]

By degrees Walpole had come to be regarded, and to regard himself, as real head of the Administration. His untiring energy, and versatility in intrigue, with the command of resources for the purpose such as no Minister had ever before possessed in a yearly expanding patronage, and a yearly augmenting flow of secret service money, rendered him master of the position. As his confidence in his power of overruling opposition and undermining irresolute independence grew, his contempt for conventionalities hardened apace into a settled unbelief in the existence of personal purity and the sincerity of patriotism, however vehemently avowed.

But on the whole his ascendancy was complete. He reduced the practice of borough-jobbing to the method and the certainty of a system; and the part he personally took in its application brought him into direct contact with men and women of every sort, and rendered him the depository of more secrets than any other man in the realm. Was it strange that he should rely more and more upon himself and less and less on those by whose aid he had risen, and whose friendship he had pledged? In the climax of invective Bolingbroke wrote of him: "The serpent, we are told, was the most subtle of all the beasts of the field. Wherever anything was to be gained he could coil himself in; wherever anything was to be feared he could wriggle himself out. Golden pippins were his favourite fruit; or, rather, Sodom apples, fair without, but rotten at the core. Life he promised, death he devised, and corruption he entailed from generation to generation."[2]

Townshend long believed himself to be indispensable, and, being attached to Walpole, and proud of him as a relative and friend, he did not easily take umbrage at his pretensions to official pre-eminence or realise the possibility of being discarded by him. Occupied with foreign affairs, and the conduct of business in the House of Lords, he left the management of the other House to his ambitious kinsman; and through the mazes of corruption left him to tread alone his devious way. But when it came to be a question whether some of the greater prizes—more especially those in the Church—promised by Wal-

[1] Chancellor King's "Notes," p. 102.

[2] Letter to Sir W. Wyndham.

pole should be conferred without consultation in the Cabinet, Townshend could not disguise his dissatisfaction, and would not readily yield. Altercations and misunderstandings arose; and the trying question was in each case who should be greatest amongst them. The Secretary often found himself in a minority; and he chafed at what he instinctively felt to be his gradual supplanting by one whose fortune he had contributed so materially to secure. Still, while unreservedly trusted by the King, he was powerful enough to tolerate and forgive many official encroachments on the part of his brother-in-law. But when he began to feel that in Norfolk men's eyes turned first to Houghton, the scene of a more comprehensive and splendid hospitality, and only afterwards to Rainham, where less ostentation dwelt, and that, by some means or other, the Whigs in the county had been brought to ask his advice subsequently to having ascertained Sir Robert's wishes, he could bear it no longer, and he resolved to make one final effort to regain in the Cabinet at least the equality he felt to be his due. From Hanover he endeavoured to pave the way for the removal of Newcastle, who sided in the Cabinet with Walpole, and the appointment in his stead of Chesterfield.

The Duke, on the other hand, sought to replace him with Harrington; while Chesterfield was told he might have the Seals, with the certain consent of the Queen. Walpole, on learning the design, leaned to the other alternative. He could not contemplate breaking with Newcastle on account of his Parliamentary influence, and he knew Harrington would prove a far more manageable roadster in his team. He, therefore, consulted her Majesty, who did not disguise her distrust of Chesterfield, not, as sometimes has been supposed, from any lingering jealousy of Lady Suffolk, whom, as a rival, she contemned, but because the irrepressible vanity and arrogance of Chesterfield seemed to her to qualify him ill for so weighty a charge. On quitting the Palace, towards evening, after a conference in which this and other matters had been discussed, Walpole called in Cleveland Square at the house of Colonel Selwyn, whose wife was Bedchamber woman to the Queen, and a trusted friend of the Minister. Townshend happened to be there, and left alone, the brothers-in-law soon warmly disagreed about negotiations which had been abandoned at the instance of Walpole, but which the Secretary persisted should be communicated to Parliament at

the same time that they were given up. The First Lord objected to this as inexpedient and likely to lead to vexatious questionings. Townshend gave way, saying, "Since you object, and the House of Commons is your concern more than mine, I shall not persist; but upon my honour, I think the other mode of proceeding would have been the most advisable." Walpole, losing his temper, rejoined: "For once, there is no man's sincerity which I doubt so much as your lordship's, and I never doubted it so much as when you are pleased to make such strong professions." Townshend, in a rage, seized him by the collar; both laid their hands on their swords, and they were only parted by the timely entrance of Mrs. Selwyn. Many efforts were made to efface the painful recollection of what had occurred, but neither would give way; Townshend resigned the Seals and the Lord-Lieutenancy of Norfolk.

Their hostess never ceased to mourn that the unworthy difference should have become irreparable in her house, and, as she believed, because she had too considerately withdrawn. Her Royal mistress only laughed when informed of what had occurred, for the Viscount was not a favourite of hers, and she did not always appreciate the haughty and rigid turn he was apt to give to disputes in foreign affairs. Walpole was too sagacious not to feel vexed with himself at having acted so undignified a part; but he had neither the grace nor the generosity to make amends while there was time: and the feud between the old friends became inappeasable. The public scandal of their quarrel was avoided, but a cordial reconciliation was impossible. When subsequently asked about the origin of their alienation, Walpole said: "It is difficult to trace the causes of a dispute between statesmen, but I will give you the history in a few words. As long as the firm of the House was Townshend and Walpole the utmost harmony prevailed; but it no sooner became Walpole and Townshend than things went wrong; and a separation ensued." Townshend perhaps supposed the prospect of his defection would bring back Walpole to a sense of obligation to preserve the family alliance. But if such had been his hope it was quickly dissipated. His place was given to Harrington, and, to the delight of the King and the bewilderment of the Tories, Lord Wilmington, on whom they had reckoned as one of their possible chiefs, became Privy Seal. Old Horace, who knew his brother's methods and motives

better, probably, than any other individual in or out of office, told Newcastle long afterwards that the real cause of his quarrel with Townshend was the refusal of Sir Robert to concur in the proposal to remove the Duke from the Secretaryship of State, in which he was no longer content to act with him as a colleague.[1]

Townshend was truly said to have conferred more obligations and yet to have met with more ingratitude than any man that ever had so long filled a high place in Administration, for when he retired he went alone, and as universally unregretted as unattended. In the interval between his resignation and the arrival of Harrington from abroad, Walpole performed the duties of the Northern Department. Other changes followed. Wilmington made way for Henry Pelham in the Pay Office, a more lucrative post than that of War, where Sir W. Strickland, M.P. for Scarborough, succeeded him. Chesterfield, who had been threatening to plunge into Opposition, and who had gone to Rainham to persuade Townshend to do the same, was beckoned back to party allegiance by the Staff of Lord Steward. The Stanhopes thus obtained two places in the Cabinet, while the Pelhams retained as many, and Sir Robert himself both first and second seat at the Board of Treasury. Chesterfield, whose impatient ambition had prompted him to take a part in debate before he was legally of age, to vote against the Court as one of the Prince of Wales's staff, to accept and then discard the post of Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard, and to refuse the Order of the Bath as unworthy of him, was recalled from the Hague as Envoy, but was propitiated, but not long satisfied, with an office which included him in the ruling Council without giving him distinctively anything to do. His cousin, William Stanhope, was worth more to the Government. In the schism between the brothers-in-law he sided at first with Townshend, but did not share his fall. Walpole wished to secure him as an ally, and, beside the office of Secretary, gave him the Garter. Chesterfield could not resist the temptation of saying, as he received the Staff, "I had lost the game, but you have taken my cards into your hand and recovered it." His ambition was to shine above his fellows as an orator, for which, in truth, he had many and great qualifications. Elaborately forming his style on the best models of antiquity, he disciplined his abundant wit to seek expression only in the nervous simplicity

[1] 26th December, 1754.—*MS.*

of native idiom. Everyone longed to hear him, listened without tiring, caught his meaning without effort, and joined in the unanimous suffrage of admiration. But few were convinced by his arguments, and fewer thought of him as a leader. Each fine performance proved the surpassing cleverness of the Earl, but failed to prove that Chesterfield believed that he was in the right. The famous taunt flung by Demosthenes at his great rival rose in every educated memory—You only act: and thus it came to pass that a brilliant and versatile career added nothing in legislation and in literature nothing but ingenious ornaments to couple with his name. He has himself left the receipt for his recondite compositions. Looking back in old age on the share he had borne in the senatorial fray, he said to his son, "I have sometimes spoken in Parliament, and not always without success; and I can assure you there is very little in it. Only give your hearers some happy phrase that they may carry away with them like a favourite air from an opera."

Carteret's term of Pro-Consulate having expired, the Duke of Dorset was sent to reign in his stead at Dublin. On his return to England he was received at Court with great marks of favour, and for a time took no active part in affairs. But when the arena of debate reopened, his pleasant resting-place at Hawnes grew too still; and, with the falling leaf, had lost its charm. He resumed the intimacy, never long interrupted, with Pulteney and Wyndham; and those who loved him not were fain to add, with the *Deus ex machinâ* of the *Craftsman*.

Would he not lead Opposition in the Peers, where in debating power he stood without an equal? Of the great men of his time, it was owned by the most malignant of his critics that he had the most genius in conceiving and eloquence in expressing great political designs. Though still comparatively young, he had the rare advantage of official experience in diplomacy and administration; and the ample fortune of his mother, whose pride and joy of life were centred in him, supplied the means of social influence that generous hospitality and free-handed sympathy with wit and learning could bestow. Argyll and Chesterfield lived in the belief each of his own superiority; and on special occasions either, if not both of them, divided public attention. But, as was well said by Bolingbroke, "eloquence that would lead mankind must flow like a stream that is fed from

a perpetual spring, and not merely pour forth its sparkling waters on some gaudy day, and remain dry during the rest of the year." The personal confidence of the King had no doubt been put in quarantine by the combined influence of the Queen and Walpole. Why the Queen disliked Carteret is not easy to say. Why Walpole hated him need not be said; but both instinctively feared a resumption of the familiarity of talk in German which had been a rare delight of George I., and which, with his grandson Frederick, Carteret knew well how to use. His aptitude for every species of affairs was shown whenever he could prevail upon himself or be prevailed upon to take up his pen—as his voluminous correspondence testifies—or his parable in the Senate, as even the meagre records of debate, reveal. There was a certain air of languor about him which the blockheads who strove to gnaw away his influence mistook for indifference—his greatest foible, that of contempt for the passing whims and inconsistencies of the many. Such was the man in whose hands Lord Cobham placed his youthful relative on entering public life, and the ambitious Cornet in the Blues was not slow in profiting by the experience of so great a master. Carteret appreciated the capacity of his pupil for comprehending the intricacies and combinations of foreign policy, and the incipient powers of protest and persuasion which with culture and courage were destined to prove equal to his own. Long after they had been severed in the paths of ambition, and come to look on each other with the jealousy of rivals, and each had had his day of supreme triumph, while the elder had been gathered to the tomb, Chatham spontaneously testified the weight of his obligations to his early teacher, with a fulness and frankness all his own: "In the upper departments of Government he had not his equal, and I feel a pride in declaring that to his friendship and instruction I owe whatever I am."

By a singular fate, Townshend, driven from power, was again succeeded by a Stanhope. Like his distinguished kinsman in a former reign, Harrington had begun his career in Spain. As a wary and painstaking diplomatist, he had earned the confidence of his Government; and for the Treaty of Seville he was rewarded with a peerage. Thenceforth he entered the political train of Newcastle, and as a docile and diligent adherent, followed faithfully. He was a cautious, inoffensive man, whom nobody disliked for his own sake; but whom George II. hated

as the mere prolongation of the shadow of the Ministerial turnkey he abhorred. Hervey quizzed him, the Queen laughed at him, and his cousin Chesterfield wondered how such an opposite to himself could have come of the same illustrious stock. But he untied the tapes of his department for Newcastle, and tied them again, and nobody was much the wiser. Between them the joint Secretaries of State contrived to live easily, as the phrase went, with the representatives of foreign Powers. Except with Spain, there was for some time no question to occupy diplomacy. But in the West Indies and along the Spanish Main, buccaneering had attained formidable proportions; and every merchantman that cleared from English ports, or was laden with spice, sugar, or rum, on her homeward voyage, trembled at the sight of the pirate craft that with impunity swept the sea. Details of the plunder and cruelty to which unarmed or half-armed English crews were subjected filled the mercantile community more and more with grief, anger, and resentment. Bristol and Liverpool petitioned frequently, and in ever-swelling tones of indignation at the state in which their trade was left by the Executive whose first duty was to protect it from violence and depredation. Newcastle and Harrington listened to deputations and promised that their complaints should be considered; but nothing effectual was done to organise a police of the ocean, and loss and suffering spread year by year. At the beginning of 1731 Opposition took up the matter as a party cause. The petitions of the merchants were referred to a Select Committee; and their reports rendered it impossible for Government to look on passively any longer. A Bill was brought in to afford protection for the time to come, but it contained no pledge or provision of compensation for the past, and when amendments were offered with this view, Members were asked in the lobbies by the Whips if they really wanted to provoke a war with Spain, and asked in the House if they meant to disparage the paternal care and efficiency of the Sovereign. Brilliant debate sparkled off ineffectually, and 207 to 135 voted against any substantial pledge of redress. Nothing could persuade Walpole to hazard war. When the Bill was sent up to the Lords it was laid aside and was not heard of for a season. But again and again complaint and attack were renewed, until by iteration they became irresistible.

The peerage for which Sir S. Compton had given up the Chair of the Commons did not heal his mortification at adminis-

trative failure, nor was his vexation likely to be lessened by the greater popularity rapidly attained by his successor, Arthur Onslow. A seat in the Lords without gifts of personal distinction was valueless without a seat in the Cabinet, and as he was of too much influence to make it safe to neglect him, Newcastle pressed that he should be made Privy Seal, and later on Lord President. In foreign affairs he muttered occasionally doubt and dissent from the peace-at-any-price policy of Walpole, hoping thereby to keep alive the Royal preference shown him. But he was no match for the overbearing earnestness of the Chief Minister in Council, and he had no name for wit or worth to which many would rally out of doors.

Trevor moved through the crowd of courtiers and senators much like any other domino at the Carnival, nobody taking the liberty to ask what he was about, and few seeming to care. But such was the man whom Walpole chose to entrust with the Privy Seal for the space of four years.[1] He had got rid of Carteret and Townshend, and no one in Cabinet was left of much more tenacity than one of Samson's withes. The third Duke of Devonshire then entered the Cabinet as Privy Seal, Lord Burlington taking his place as Captain of the Guard. Lord Delawar was made Treasurer of the Household; Lord Leicester Constable of the Tower; Horace Walpole the Elder Cofferer, and Conyers D'Arcy[2] Comptroller of the Household

The Cabinet in 1731 stood thus:—

Earl of Wilmington	...	*Lord President*
Duke of Devonshire	...	*Privy Seal*
Lord King	...	*Lord Chancellor*
Duke of Dorset ...	...	*Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland*
Sir R. Walpole ...	...	*First Lord of the Treasury*
Duke of Newcastle and Lord Harrington	...	*Secretaries of State*
Earl of Chesterfield	...	*Lord Steward*
Duke of Grafton...	...	*Chamberlain*
Duke of Montagu	...	*Master of the Ordnance*
Henry Pelham ...	...	*Paymaster-General*
Earl of Torrington	...	*First Lord of the Admiralty*
Earl of Scarborough	...	*Master of the Horse*
Duke of Rutland...	...	*Duchy of Lancaster*

[1] March, 1726, to May, 1730.

[2] Afterwards Secretary Holdernesse.

While the King was in Hanover, with Newcastle only for his Minister, permission was given to Louis XV. to enlist in Ireland 750 men to fill up the ranks of the Brigade in his service, which consisted of natives of that kingdom. On the arrival in Dublin of the French officers sent to engage the recruits no little stir arose, and the Lords Justices not having been previously informed, wrote to the Government in England for instructions what to do. A meeting of the Cabinet took place at Secretary Harrington's, when the promise given by the King was overruled as ill-advised, and immediate steps were directed to be taken for the purpose of inducing the Court of Versailles to waive the claim for its fulfilment. The reproof thus administered manifestly fell upon Newcastle, as he was the only Minister with George II. at Göhrdt throughout the autumn. Without waiting for the interchange of communications with Hanover a despatch was prepared by the Secretary at home, approved by his colleagues and forwarded to Paris, in which the Cardinal was urged to obtain from his master a release of the King of England from the pledge given in his name:[1] and the project of enlistment was abandoned.

Pulteney daily gained popularity out of doors, and influence within. He had led the Opposition of George II., when Prince of Wales, to the Government of his father; and he now began to build up Opposition of his son. Gradually his winning manners, great versatility, and command of words at will, drew together discontented Whigs, yielding Tories, and desponding Jacobites; all of whom mingled at Leicester House; and, by a strange misreading of the popular mind, he thought it necessary to volunteer repeatedly a pledge, that if they could but oust Walpole he would in no case profit by his fall. Nobody thanked him, or thought the more of him, for tying to his girdle such shackles for his feet in the hour of triumph; and when it came, he had cause to feel how weak he had been.

Lord Hervey, in private life, "loved Pulteney"; but he respected Walpole, and did not wish to break with him. When obliged to go abroad for his health, the Minister had secured him a pension of £1,000 a-year, for which he felt that he had done no manner of service, and by which he was all the more bound to support the Government. Lady Hervey (the sweet

[1] Chancellor King's "Notes," p. 126.

Molly Lepel of Leicester House) hated Walpole, who had unsuccessfully made love to her; and with the help of Pulteney, who was her intimate friend, she persuaded her husband to resign his pension on his return home. His letter doing so is full of professions of fidelity with a sprinkling of mild chagrin at not having had before some office given him which would entitle him to take part in Parliamentary debate. This he could not do, he said, while receiving an unearned pension. The hint had its effect, and he was given the Gold Key of Vice-Chamberlain. Pulteney's advice thus tended to hasten an alienation which ripened into active hostility.[1]

The fury of the war of pens exceeded even that of debate. The new Vice-Chamberlain was one of the most pungent and provoking defenders of the Government. He wrote with equal facility in prose and verse; smote hard at the heads of Opposition in pamphlets, which he frequently submitted to the Minister; and in many a well-turned rhyme his wit stung severely. Pulteney was so exasperated by the picture drawn of him in *Sedition and Defamation Displayed*, that he challenged Hervey, whom he believed to be the author, and whom he wounded in the duel which ensued. He afterwards discovered that he was mistaken; and then, ascribing the pamphlet to Walpole, published a reply which surpassed the provocation in abuse. Ultimately, it turned out that Sir William Yonge had really been his assailant; and Walpole had no abler ally or more faithful friend. In Dr. Johnson's opinion, he was the greatest speaker of his time; and in one of the pitched battles, in which every man did his best, and Sir Robert by a rare effort of skill and vigour narrowly escaped defeat, Pulteney, lost in admiration of his talent, said to him, as he sat down, "Nobody else can do what you can." The Minister replied, "Yonge did better." Hervey's natural deficiencies of person, and the vain attempts he made artificially to hide them, rendered him an inexhaustible theme of ridicule, as his thorough-going partisanship did of hatred to the wits of Opposition; and all the bitterness wherewith Pope lashed the other Whigs was as nothing compared with the concentrated malignity with which he impaled him on the epithet of Sporus. In spite of his shrivelled form and

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs," Vol. I., p. 141.

painted face, however, he succeeded, by the readiness of his humour and the terseness and point of his writing and conversation, to make himself a favourite with the Queen, whom he amused, and the Minister, whom he efficiently served. Had he been a man of obscure lineage, he might have possibly fought his way to a private secretaryship, and have had leave to dine with the curate and the steward in the country, or at some cheap coffee-house in town; and when he had been used, and his health was broken, he might have lingered on life's brink upon a shabby pension; or, forgotten, starved. But being the heir of the house of Bristol, he was in his father's lifetime called to the Upper House, and, at last, made a Cabinet Minister.[1]

Walpole, feeling no longer under any necessity to restrain his wrath, made George II. avenge him of his enemies, at a Council held at Hampton Court. The King called for the Book, and directed the name of Pulteney to be struck out of the list of Privy Councillors; and he further ordered that he should be removed from all Commissions of the Peace and Vice-Lieutenancy of Counties.[2]

To suit the humour of the hour, Mountfort's *Fall of Mortimer* was revived. In the prologue the political purpose was avowed :—

> " The British Constitution so much prized,
> You'll see by one bad man was almost sacrificed.
> Grinding oppression large advances made,
> And foul corruption was become a trade."

The colloquy of discontented knights and nobles recalled the many arrogant assumptions of the First Lord, and injustice wrought at his bidding to make room for such as he preferred. Especially he was reviled for making a showy Peace without secure foundations, which it was said could not last, and yet would cost the country dear. Grumbling of the meaner sort was interwoven with seditious threats of mailed revolt in times gone by. The openness with which offices and dignities in Church and State were trafficked in to prop up power or gratify the greed of favourites was pressed upon the notice of the Heir to the Throne, as it had been in Plantagenet days. The over-

[1] Privy Seal in 1740.
[2] July, 1731, *London Gazette.*

bearing Minister of Edward II. exclaimed, "The weight of private and public affairs hangs so heavy on my shoulders that were it not for the Queen I don't know what I should do. What with solicitations, envy, and keeping things easy and quiet among my creatures, I'm plagued out of my senses." In a dialogue with the Queen, he was made to foreshadow what must be the consequence if his rivals should gain power by their ascendancy with her son, and her Majesty was made scornfully to own her unmaternal disposition, and to vow that she would not submit in any event to drop the reins of Government. The ignorance of the public was trusted to overlook the wide disparity of circumstances between the flagrant scandals of Isabella's Court and the decorum of that of Caroline; and her unfortunate aversion for her son was rudely depicted in the jealousy and hatred of the mother of Edward III. Even faction did not seriously pretend belief in the analogy of regal dishonour; but the re-edited text of the drama was packed full of obvious allusions and insulting phrases that rendered their citation in the daily Press intolerable.

Government was so incensed at its indecency and injustice, that a posse of constables was sent to the stage door of Drury Lane, with orders to arrest the chief performers. They had notice, however, and made off in time to escape, while the piece was suspended. The players made their peace as best they could with the Lord Chamberlain, who peremptorily "forbade their tongue to speak of Mortimer," and the dramatic prototype of Ministerial usurpation was consigned to rest for another thirty years.

Denied the advantages of histrionic scenery and costume, the bitterness of political controversy sought fresh vent in pamphlet and periodical. The hail of party invective was only interrupted by laughing gleams of caricature in prose or ribald rhyme unmeasured in the enmity they breathed and unmistakable in personality of aim. Walpole's greed of power made him especially, if not exclusively, worth vilipending; and, with all his toughness and phlegm, he could not keep his temper. For him the Press was a pillory, which at Court he affected to spurn as affording only harmless amusement to the mob; but at the Cockpit he spoke of it as intolerable, and insisted that the law officers should be instructed to put it down. He

believed that *Caleb Danvers* was Pulteney, and that the printer might be scared into giving him up. The calmer-judging of his colleagues would fain have let the *Craftsman* spend its classic vehemence in vain; but the Dictator would have his way, and prosecutions were resolved on.

The Grand Jury of Middlesex were asked to present as false, scandalous, and malicious libels, tending to bring the Government into contempt, and mislead the people into a belief that they were aggrieved by needless taxation, as also to sow doubts of the legality of the King's title to the Crown, and of the wisdom of the foreign policy of the Government, the authors, performers, and publishers of certain plays, pamphlets, and journals, the most remarkable of which were the new edition of *The Fall of Mortimer, Robin's Game, or Seven's the Main, The Chelsea Monarch, or Money Rules All*, particular numbers of the *Daily Courant*, and *Fog's Journal*, and an ironical answer to the *Craftsman*, all of which deserved to be brought to condign punishment.

A belief prevailed that Pulteney contributed good writing as well as hard cash to the support of the *Craftsman;* and there is no trace of his disavowal. But after Bolingbroke's death, Franklyn, the publisher, on whose courage and fidelity the promoters had good cause to rely, told Horace Walpole that, beyond furnishing political hints, Pulteney took no part in the publication and never wrote an article in it.[1] He and Wyndham, with other persons of distinction, were recognised among the crowd awaiting the trial. When asked had they found true bills, eleven Grand Jurors only answered their names, and they refused the suggestion of the Judge that one of the Common Jury panel should be associated with them in order to make up the legal quorum.[2]

Hoadly, the ablest friend of Ministers on the Episcopal Bench, in a letter doubtless intended for the eyes of the Queen, was concerned to see the freedom of the Press at last break into excess; but what could usefully be attained by the prosecution of printers and publishers now set on foot? "I defy them to name any one instance (excepting the case of high treason) in which a prosecution of this sort did not end to the prejudice of the

[1] Letter to Mann, 27th April, 1753.
[2] 11th July, 1731.

Administration, even where they succeeded in a sentence for punishment; how much less where they, perhaps, can never succeed, but must go on still to disappointment, as they have done already. I wish they would consider this experience, instead of consulting their present anger. I am sure I could name twenty instances of the truth of what I now say, and what I have often said to them and theirs heretofore."

The prosecution lay over till Michaelmas Term, and curiosity was agape as to what the next step would be; but the second and third of November passed, and the Attorney-General made no sign. The *Courant* published a paragraph noting the fact without comment, but took care to give five columns of argumentative answer to the fallacies and futilities of the *Craftsman.* The savour of penitence was sweet in the nostrils of power, and the peace-offering was accepted. The *Craftsman* stuck to his fight, and reiterated in plainer English, if possible, his re-actionary theories of democratic kingcraft.

While resident at Dawley, Bolingbroke corresponded with not a few friends and officials of Government on terms of presumed intimacy and genial profession of regard. Scarce a word sometimes was said of politics, and not even a grumble at bad weather to mar the gentle flow of good taste and good humour, which he knew so well how to affect even when he felt it not.[1]

Lord Essex, in his way, kept up a still less eclectic correspondence, including leading members of the enemy in Parliament. Pulteney excused his abstinence from rumours of the racier sort by reminding the Earl that in the then state of the Post, "Sir Robert would see everything he wrote to him, and his friend the Duke of Newcastle would know a little of the matter."[2] But Bolingbroke reverted under his breath to the gratification of the power of invective that he loved, and Walpole engaged more inveterately than ever in organising the resources of obloquy, wherewith his opponents were bespattered. His creed was a profound belief in metal-almighty, which when duly appealed to, never failed. His first important office, sufficiently profitable in clean hands, he risked and lost for the sake of a corrupt present declared by Parliament to have been a bribe, the discovery whereof lodged him in the Tower. But the mysteries of money-

[1] To Lord Essex, Minister at Turin, 1st Oct., 1732.—*MS.*

[2] November, 1732.—*MS.*

making, commercial and political, retained their fascination. More knowing than his mis-calculating colleagues, he early saw through the chimerical imposture of Law, and would have warned them individually and collectively against the South Sea snare; but finding his expostulations useless, he went on with the crowd just as if he were deceived, taking care to sell out in time. For his family he was never tired of accumulating sinecures and pensions, and that he contrived to pile up riches no one attempted to deny. But if he loved gold, he was ready to spend it not only in pomp and pleasure, but in constant and considerable expenditure for its defence. The openness of his dealings in the lobby had become a by-word. And when denounced in contemporary speech and writing, he did not grudge high pay for stout and saucy contradiction. One of his chief minions in the Press, Arnall, was said to have netted from time to time £10,000, by the manufacture of fables serviceable to the Minister, and the fearless satirist, provoked by their audacity, exclaimed in irony, "Spirit of Arnall! aid me while I lie!"

Notwithstanding the repeal of the Schism Act, the dream still troubled fitfully some of the zealots of ecclesiastical ascendancy, that a license from the bishop of the diocese was in point of law indispensable for the teaching of a grammar school. At Olney, near Northampton, Dr. Doddridge had succeeded in establishing an academy where the sons of Dissenters of the middle class availed themselves of the opportunity of obtaining sound classical and scientific education without being obliged to conform to the rights of the Established Church. Leave had not been asked for the opening of the seminary; and until its reputation spread, its liberty of learning was not questioned. But at length Reynolds, Vicar-General of Peterborough, in the name of Bishop Clavering, served notice of a suit for "teaching boys and young men in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew speech, without any licence or faculty, thereby endangering their souls' health, and the welfare of the community." Unlearned in the law, the master sought the advice of Dunk Halifax, the nephew and intimate of the Secretary of State, who bade him fear nothing and make no concession that might set a precedent for like proceedings elsewhere. The result vindicated this course, Lord Chancellor King dismissing the intolerant petition with costs. Walpole had devised and carried in the Cabinet a practical scheme of relief from the bur-

then of the Test Acts in England. Some years before an Act of Indemnity had been conceded in Ireland to Presbyterians from the penalties incurred by them for not taking the Coronation oaths, and the Queen would have rejoiced that an equal measure of relaxation had been obtained in England. Difficulties without number stood in the way as they are always sure to do in the path of everything new that is really good. It had taken no little pains and trouble to bring timorous friends to this neutral ground of toleration and to hold them there, and to keep up to the mark those whose firmness thawed at every hot breath of intolerance. But the Bill of Indemnity, once passed, was renewed every year after for a century, with ever-decreasing qualms and quibbles, until at last the time-eaten statute of Charles II. was swept away.

With Stanhope and Sunderland, the hopes of the Dissenters of an absolute repeal of the Test Act had seemed to die, for nothing could induce Walpole to attempt its repeal. He would not have minded so much the dissatisfaction of the High Church clergy; but the exultation of the emancipated would, he feared, destroy him. With the signal astuteness that formed so distinctive a feature in his character, he had probably perceived a new influence maturing unnoticed by courtiers and intriguers, which in the casualties of Royal life, might one day come to be of no little weight Caroline, while Princess of Wales, ventured not to meddle in affairs, or even in political conversations, lest her husband's position, already difficult enough, should be said by any to be further embarrassed by her open and unadvised speaking. Walpole instinctively discerned that her thoughts were better worth sounding than those of most of his colleagues, and that her repressed but earnest leanings in favour of the opinions of Hoadly and Clarke might hereafter exercise no little influence in Church and State. Cautiously but continuously the wiliest of flatterers contrived to pay his intellectual court to this remarkable woman, and sought to enlist her sympathy in the difficulties of creed and caste with which he wished her to believe his political love of religious liberty had to contend.

The Dissenters had hitherto acquiesced in their exclusion from all higher offices, and relying on the fair words in private of some of the party in power, had zealously supported them at elections. But as year after year rolled by without the repeal of their

statutable disqualifications, they began to think they had been passive too long; and as a dissolution drew nigh they proceeded to organise in every town and county committees to press their suit and obtain if possible some definite answer before the general election. All this was very embarrassing to those who had never meant to risk their places by keeping their promises, or weaken their party by alienating the many who regarded the ascendancy of the Church as a prime consideration in the political game. Queen Caroline was persuaded to send for Hoadly, who had consistently advocated at all times the rightfulness and policy of repealing the Test Act, and urged him to use his known influence with the Dissenters not to press their claim at so inconvenient a season. The Bishop seems to have acted cautiously in the matter, but the part he undertook inevitably drew upon him suspicion; and he became the subject of much misrepresentation accordingly. A false account of his interview with the Queen was put about, which mortified him so much that he went to Walpole to remonstrate and to warn him that in defence of his own consistency he must reiterate his conviction that there was no ground either of expediency or justice in further prolonging the disabilities of the Nonconformists. The wily strategist assured him he had never heard of the rumour; thought the Bishop's character stood too high to be touched by it; was sure no rational man could mistake his opinions; and confidently intimated that his own were the same. Hoadly was not duped, but he knew that an unreasonable discussion of the question in Parliament would split the Parliamentary party, and commit many to the wrong side, without securing any counteracting advantage. If he were only authorised to assure his Dissenting friends of the Minister's real sentiments and favourable intentions, something might be done to accommodate the difficulty. But Sir Robert would give no pledge, and the Bishop was baffled. A London Committee, however, had been chosen, to whom those of the provinces confided the task of negotiating with Whitehall. A formal conference took place between a deputation from the Committee and the Lord Chancellor, Lord President, the two Secretaries of State, the Speaker, and the First Lord of the Treasury. According to the Vice-Chamberlain, who acted as Wag-in-Waiting, Sir Robert repeated most of the things he had said to the Bishop of Salisbury. The

Speaker avoided giving an opinion on the thing itself, but was explicit on the inexpediency of bringing it now before Parliament. Lord President looked wise, was dull, took snuff, and said nothing. Harrington acted a similar part. The Chancellor and Newcastle had done better had they followed that example, but "both spoke very plentifully, and were equally unintelligible, the one from having lost his understanding, and the other from never having had any."[1] The result was that the deputation reported in favour of postponing the question; and between the manœuvring skill of Ministers, and the compliance of those who had been entrusted with the conduct of the business, the Dissenters were obliged to put up once more with disappointment.

Two individuals, hitherto unknown, appear about this time upon the scene, each without the adventitious aid of rank, wealth, or connections, who were each destined to play a notable part in the confidential councils of Government. Andrew Stone, a gentleman of good character, lately called to the Bar, was introduced by his relative, Lord Barnard, to the Secretary of State, as being worthy of his notice and possessing qualities likely to render him especially useful and worthy of trust. The aspirant to official employment rendered himself so agreeable, that his Grace made him one of his private secretaries at a salary of £200 a-year, for "he was the most charming man he had ever known."[2] He soon acquired unbounded influence, which in the main he appears to have exercised usefully and sagaciously, having not only the faculty of inventing at all times clear thoughts for his often puzzled patron, but the rarer gift of making him believe them to be his own.

Mrs. Howard, still reckoned beautiful, but growing rather deaf, retained her place at Court; piquing so little the jealousy of the Queen that when her husband became Earl of Suffolk she was made Mistress of the Robes. Not long afterwards she was left a widow with sufficient jointure to choose a residence for herself beyond the rim of ceremony and splendour. Lords Pembroke and Burlington designed for her Marble Hill near Richmond; Lord Bathurst and Mr. Pope the gardens, while Gay and Arbuthnot undertook the decorations of the interior;

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs," Vol. I., p. 157.

[2] Newcastle to his wife, 29th August, 1732.—*MS.*

and here she was glad, as she said, to escape into quiet and liberty after fifteen years of servitude.

Meanwhile, a younger and more gifted rival attracted the admiration of the King. While at Herrenhausen in 1731, his wandering fancy was captivated by the girlish looks and unartificialised grace of Sophia Walmoden, daughter of one of his household there. To this cause was ascribed the unusual length of his stay abroad.

No pains were spared to make the utmost mischief of his inconstancy, and as he did not revisit Hanover in the ensuing year the Queen was led to believe that his affection was not more fixed than it had sometimes been before. There was no rumour of the new favourite appearing in England; and even Hervey did not imagine that there could be any lasting cause for Queenly misgiving or a Minister's mistrust.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EXCISE SCHEME.

1732—34.

Transfer of Taxation from Land to Trade—Salt Tax—Tobacco and Wine—Criticism of Pulteney—Dwindling Majorities—Excise Scheme Abandoned—Sir C. Wager First Lord of the Admiralty—Hardwicke on the Woolsack—Talbot Chief Justice—Attempt to Repeal Septennial Act—General Elections—Pelhams Everywhere Successful—Harrington a Cypher—Hoadly's Hopes of Winchester—Relief of Quakers—Bolingbroke's Dissertation on Parties.

WALPOLE was now at the height of power. In the Cabinet he had got rid of nearly every one suspected of clinging to the old right of personal judgment; and from the Parliamentary harvest-field, if he had not driven all who sowed tares, he was able to sift and scatter the fruit of their thwarting husbandry. Majorities fluctuating from two to three score defeated every attack on Government. The second Treaty of Vienna had won back the friendship of Charles VI. by recognising his daughter Maria Theresa as heiress of the Empire, reversing the policy of Townshend; and France being faithful to the policy of Fleury, so long as a breach with Spain could be averted, there was no contingency visible of Continental war. The revenue had not lost its elasticity, and one year with another it adequately met the expenditure. The number of regular troops under arms was under 18,000; and, except by some inconsiderable additions to the Artillery and Marines, the standing forces of the Kingdom had not been augmented. Trade and Agriculture if not always flourishing, were for the most part uncomplaining; protecting duties kept up the price of corn, and the spirit of maritime enterprise sought without check profit and adventure on every sea. Dynastic disaffection hardly knew where to lay its head; the Colonies did not murmur; and Ireland was mute. Yet it was

in such a condition of things that the Minister matured projects of finance tending thoroughly to change the balance of burthens borne by the different classes of the community, and so to change it as to fill the opulent more fully with good things, and to send the needy emptier away. None of the specious reasons assigned by the Minister when driven hard in defence of his memorable scheme, nor all of them taken together, sufficed to account for his confidence in suddenly launching it, or his angry and resentful obstinacy in treating as enemies all who opposed it. Underneath all these there doubtless lay the hope and purpose of rendering his power impregnable by the purchase of sympathies and suffrages that otherwise he knew he could not gain. The privileged orders had for half a century submitted to pay an income tax of from ten to twenty per cent., in order to carry on the Government upon the constitutional system: a smaller proportion of the entire cost being borne by duties of excise on a few articles of every-day consumption. If the number of these could be sufficiently multiplied, nobles and squires might be relieved by degrees from the weight of an impost which even Whigs were never allowed to forget, and half the Tories could never thoroughly forgive.

During the long wars with France the land tax had been raised to four shillings in the pound, and the increasing wants of the Exchequer were met by excise on beer, spirits, and salt, customs on wine, tobacco, brandy, rum, and spice, raw silk, and wool, and fabrics of every kind; lotteries and loans. On the return of peace, and with the prospect of its continuance, various schemes had been tried for the liquidation of debt, with but indifferent success; one of the most plausible being Walpole's device of the Sinking Fund. He had likewise done a good deal in 1717 and 1722 in reducing import duties, and recently the odious and mischievous salt tax, which had crippled the fishing, curing, and tanning industries, had been allowed by him to expire. Lotteries were still made use of occasionally to eke out the revenue; but as everybody in good society gambled, nobody could pretend to complain of the Treasury doing so likewise. The yearly rate of the land tax had been lowered in the last reign to two shillings in the pound. Such was the financial condition in February, 1732, when Walpole, with the consent of the Cabinet, opened his memorable Budget, the first chapter of which

was a Bill for reimposing the duty on salt recently repealed as odious and pernicious. The measure was recognised as a tentative step in the development of a comprehensive scheme for shifting the burthen of taxation from income to consumption, and lightening the charges on property by increasing those on articles of first necessity. "Of all the taxes I ever could think of," he said, "there is not one more general or less felt than that upon salt. It is a tax which every man in the nation contributes to according to his circumstances, a poor man such a trifle that it will hardly bear a name; a rich man who lives luxuriously contributes more; a man of great estates keeps many servants, and consequently contributes more. Upon the other hand, there never was a tax laid upon this nation more unjust and unequal than the land tax. Land-holders bear but a small proportion to the people of this nation, or of any nation; yet no man contributes any the least share to this tax but that he is possessed of a landed estate. Yet it has been continued for above forty years. It has continued so long and has lain so heavy that I may venture to say many a landed gentleman in this Kingdom has thereby been utterly ruined and undone. This consideration has prompted me to move that the former Acts for levying a duty on salt be revived for three years. If successful in this motion, I shall move that one shilling in the pound, and no more, be raised upon land; but if the House does not agree to the motion I now make, I must move for a land tax of two shillings in the pound, for so much will be absolutely necessary for the current service of the year. I have no other view than a desire to serve the landed interest, and I shall always look upon it as a great honour that, after a continuance of a land tax of four, three, or two shillings at least in the pound for forty years, it was at last reduced to one at a time when I had a share in the Administration. Our nobility and gentry were once famous for their hospitality and generosity. If the unavoidable necessities of State have obliged them for so many years to abridge their expense, and contract their manner of living, let us do at least what is in our power to restore them to their former state by relieving them of a part of that burthen which they, and they only, have for so many years been charged with."

Sir W. Wyndham led the refusal of the proffered boon. Many of the country gentlemen, he said, were poor indeed, and

most of them were pinched by taxation and mortgage, but they looked for reduction of public expenditure as the legitimate means of relief, not to asserting for themselves a special exemption from national liability. This change, on the contrary, would involve a multiplication of Government officials, without whom no indirect tax could be collected, while for the tax on land no greater staff was needed for one rate than for another. But, in truth, this was a dangerous precedent. It was a first step towards a general excise upon everything they could eat or drink.

Walpole scoffed at the fears of the Executive being made dangerously strong by the addition of 400 or 500 salt officers. As for a general excise, he was persuaded that no man ever thought of introducing it into this country. He could answer for himself that he never did. But an excise was only a word for a tax raised in a different manner; and if by experience it should be found that the present method of raising taxes was more burthensome than an excise, he did not see why they should be frightened by the two words general excise.

Pulteney declared that public expectation had been raised high by the promise of retrenchment in the Speech from the Throne, that the Estimates for the current year would be found less than in any preceding. How were these hopes to be disappointed? A part of the community was, indeed, to be relieved, but the remainder, constituting by far the greater portion, were to be obliged to pay a tax for which the only excuse was that it was equally onerous to most of them. But two years ago the tax on salt was taken off to relieve the manufacturers and artificers, who then were said to be especially depressed, and whose condition was not said to be materially improved now, though it could not be supposed that in the interval the landed gentry had become perceptibly poorer. Could his Majesty be supposed to have changed his opinion, or was it only his servants who had changed theirs? Giving them credit for the best motives, he still contended that it were more for the credit of the Crown, the welfare of the country, and contentment of the people, that fiscal arrangements should be allowed to remain as they then were, rather than an invidious exemption should be set up, without the excuse of any pressing necessity in favour of the ruling classes. Nevertheless, the House, by 225

to 187, voted the Resolution.[1] Many amendments were attempted in Committee, but the Ministerial majority rather increased than diminished, and in the Upper House the Bill passed with comparatively few dissentients.

Had Walpole been content with carrying the salt tax on the grounds he assigned for it, the ferment might have died down, and his expansion of the Bonding system to wine and tobacco could only have tended to conciliate his opponents in the wholesale trade, as it eventually did, when that part of the scheme was embodied without difficulty in a fresh statute. But in the elation of triumph in his first essay, he indulged in the forecast that his fiscal policy would be a very good thing, if applied to many more articles capable of yielding excise. It was this unwary threat that kindled widespread fear and anger in the community, and justified the Press in reiterating the apprehension that he contemplated a progressive transfer of taxation from income to expenditure. Nobody looked for change, nobody wanted it; and the clamour it raised was notable. But success had made Sir Robert sanguine, and he persuaded himself that, above and below all the controversies of party, he could appeal without fail to the selfish motives of the rich and noble, and bribe them by a direct offer to reduce their contributions to the State, increasing proportionally those exacted from the many who live by labour. Did not the whole of one House, and four-fifths of the other belong to the ranks and conditions that he proposed to untax? Was it in Parliamentary human nature to resist such temptation, whatever the paulopost future reproach or peril might be?

During the Recess, the managers of Opposition had not been idle, and ere the year was out the varied tunings of the instruments began to harmonise into a menacing approach to movements in a minor key. The notes of warning sounded in the debate on the salt tax of a comprehensive excise to come, had been caught up and repeated everywhere, and though Members of the Government were not allowed to pretend uneasiness, they were unable to stop their ears, or forbear giving sigh to sigh when safe from overhearing. Even the experienced Delafaye, who was confidentially in charge of all the Ducal Secretary of State's half secrets and omissions, gave occasional vent to his concern at the general outlook :—

[1] 9th February, 1732.

"The intended turning the customs on wine and tobacco, or part of them, into an excise is what is likely to give the most occupation this Session. You will have seen in the prints what caballing there has been all over the Kingdom to stir up the people against it. There is not a cobbler but is made to believe that he is to pay an excise before he eats his bread and cheese and drinks his pot of beer. Some blame Sir Robert Walpole for omitting to have something printed to explain his scheme. I think it more becoming the dignity of the Government to let the thing justify itself and the people see how they have been imposed upon by incendiaries."[1]

Henry Pelham, who responded more closely to the views and utterances of the undaunted Minister, tried to put a better face on affairs. "Parliament is now met, and the enemy ranged, and talking big, but if I can judge by their countenances it is but a copy; and I am satisfied the clamours they have endeavoured to raise are local, and will be easier quelled than even those they have been formerly foiled in."[2]

The produce of the revenue did not realise expectation; and if a grumbling clerk in the Department had possessed the gift of prophecy, which the dullest of subsequent Chancellors of the Exchequers is said to have possessed, he might have whispered to a mate that the First Lord would after all find out "in fiscal arithmetic twice two too frequently made one." The doubled salt tax fell short of what was wanted by several hundred thousand pounds; and Walpole was obliged to ask, in Committee of Ways and Means, leave to take from the Sinking Fund half a million to defray ordinary out-goings. Pulteney took away the breath of the House by the announcement that something worse was actually impending, something "more terrible and monstrous," which he called on Government to disclose before they were asked to vote on this preliminary misappropriation. "I will not call it robbery, for that is a harsh word; and I admit that on former occasions lesser sums have been abstracted from the Sinking Fund, on pretence of borrowing, but these have never been repaid; and now it is proposed to snip £500,000 more. The right hon. gentleman had the vanity once to call himself the father of the Sinking Fund; but if Solomon's judgment was

[1] Delafaye to Lord Essex, 18th January, 1733.—*MS.*

[2] To Lord Essex, 29th January, 1733.—*MS.*

right, he who is thus for splitting and dividing the child can never be deemed to be the true father. He may claim, and I shall allow him the honour of being the father of two other children lately brought forth in this nation—a Standing Army and an Excise." The further development of the latter project was, in fact, so far advanced that its approach had become generally known, and the resolution dealing with the Sinking Fund was looked upon by all parties as but an interpolation not worth trying their strength upon. It was consequently allowed to pass without division, after a debate in which the best defence of Ministers was made by Henry Pelham, the favourite disciple of Walpole, and who was in due time destined to take his place as Finance Minister.

The commercial body likewise resisted for the most part any scheme which, as was said by its defenders, would make all England one free port—not because they were insensible of the advantages that would thence arise, but because they viewed with aversion and suspicion not to be appeased an augmentation of the vexations and burthens of a general system of excise. An Act was indeed passed without opposition, which gave the option of warehousing tea, coffee, and chocolate free of the customs charge, and paying the duty upon them in broken bulk as they were taken out of bond by the wholesale dealers. But when it was sought to apply the principle still further, people took alarm. Government strove to rest their intended reforms on the need of correcting great mischiefs and scandals in the collection of the revenue. Abuses to an extent not generally known existed in the Customs Department. From the great extent of coast and the seafaring habits of the population, it had become impossible to prevent the growth of smuggling in proportion as the duties on articles of luxury brought from abroad were gradually augmented. A Committee of Enquiry reported, that the gains of this unlawful occupation grew greater every year, and with them the number and hardihood of those engaged in it. In the space of nine years 251,320 pounds weight of tea and 652,924 gallons of brandy had been seized and condemned; and upwards of 2,000 persons prosecuted. 229 boats and other vessels had been condemned, 185 of which had been burnt, and the remainder retained for the service of the Crown. There seemed to be more connivance with regard to wine, as within two

years 4,738 hogsheads were run in Hampshire, Dorsetshire, and Devonshire alone, for which thirty revenue officers were dismissed, and 400 persons were indicted. Tobacco, subject to somewhat less than sixpence-halfpenny a pound average duty, was computed to yield a revenue of £754,131 : but the net produce, after deducting the cost of collection, drawbacks, and losses by fraud of one description or other, did not amount to more than £161,000. Persons esteemed rich and respectable were known to be deeply implicated in this system, and among the most attractive ventures of trade those of contraband were notoriously reckoned. To the demoralisation thus fostered was to be added the disgrace of crimes of violence, which frequently went unpunished. Within a short period 250 Custom House officers had been beaten and abused, and six had been murdered. The First Lord of the Treasury knew well how to make the most of such a case for fiscal reform, and he relied on his power as an advocate and his authority over his Parliamentary retainers, to carry the change he meditated. Before his comprehensive plans were matured, however, the storm against them had risen so high that he contented himself with proposing a reduction of the tobacco duties, and their immediate transfer from the Customs Department to that of Excise. Everyone might thenceforth import and re-export as much of the coveted leaf as he pleased, without any charge upon entry. It was only upon being taken out of the warehouse for home consumption that the duty was to be levied as a part of the inland revenue. A small addition to the number of officials to be employed in the collection of the revenue would be sufficient, and he ridiculed the apprehensions entertained of augmented patronage or influence; and denounced the mob of sturdy beggars, as he termed the numerous deputations and petitioners who thronged the approaches to the House; and tried to persuade the landed interest that he was their best friend.

The long-expected struggle began on the 14th of March, when "there scarce ever was a greater appearance in the House, nor a more numerous crowd in the Court of Requests, Westminster Hall, and the adjoining places and passages. The precaution, usual on such occasions, of having Justices of the Peace and constables on hand was taken, but proved, happily, needless, for there did not happen the least incident tending to a tumult.

The debate was opened at three-quarters past twelve by Sir Robert Walpole, who, in a speech that lasted two hours and a quarter, explained his scheme," which put a fourpenny excise duty on tobacco, with an odd penny reserved to the Customs for the Civil List, the transfer of the duty on wine being postponed till after the holidays. "The Master of the Rolls had come," he said (and everyone believed him), "quite unbiased, and fully resolved to be determined by the debate. He recapitulated the arguments on both sides, adding some good reasons of his own which induced him to be for the question." Sir Robert, self-possessed and confident, summed up the debate in a second speech at midnight, and the motion was carried by a large majority.[1] But, instead of abating, the storm grew greater than ever. The minority bid the timid hearken to the general shout of execration with which out of doors the project had been received. The sunshine of faith in the majority was overcast, and even incredulous Delafaye began to feel something of the responsibilities:

"We are now, after a week's cessation of arms, fighting the excise over again. Yesterday the Bill was brought in, and though it is not usual to have long debates upon a first reading, the House sat till half-an-hour after midnight. At last it was ordered a second reading by 236 against 200; so you see it is a matter stiffly contended by the minority, and all manner of art and industry is used by the Opposition to keep up a spirit against it. It is observed that Lord Chesterfield's brothers voted against the majority. The motion to print the Bill was rejected to-day by 128 to 112, and the proposal of an excise on wine is put off till to-morrow sennight; so that we are for doing nothing rashly, and probably it will be a long session."[2] It was vain to deny the significancy of these dwindling numbers. They were in part explained by the successive defection of several persons of note, and some even of those who held posts in the Army and Household. The Minister was hustled on quitting the House, and the language of petitions from all parts of the country became daily more threatening. That of the Common Council was conspicuously violent, and on all sides there were indications of a state of feeling the most sinister.

[1] Delafaye to Lord Essex, 15th March, 1733.—*MS.*

[2] Delafaye to Lord Essex, 5th April, 1733.—*MS.*

The Queen sent for Lord Scarborough, as one on whose calmness and clearness of judgment she was accustomed to depend, and sought his unreserved opinion and advice. He is said to have replied that he would answer for his regiment against the Pretender, but not against the opposers of the excise scheme. Her courage, till then unshaken, gave way, and with emotion she exclaimed that the measure must be dropped. Walpole called a meeting of his Parliamentary supporters and desired to hear what they thought should be done. His flatterers encouraged him to persist, and he was assured by his Whips that they might still pull through. But he felt that at last he must give way, and on the 11th of April he deferred proceeding further with the Bill till the 12th of June, before which time it was understood the Session would have closed. He had become convinced that, even if carried, the measure could not be executed save by military force; and he would not, he said, incur the risk of bloodshed for the sake of any tax, however gainful or just.[1] Opposition were too glad to allow this to pass without contention, and then to triumph on the evidence thus afforded that the comprehensive tariff of the Treasury was breaking down. In the last division several whom Government depended on deserted. In all twenty-seven Members who had originally supported changed their votes. One of these was Colonel W. Townshend, a younger son of the late Minister, who, besides the patent office of Usher of the Exchequer given him by his father, held the post of Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales.

The joy of the people broke forth in every variety of form. All over London bonfires blazed, and merry-makers made the night air loud. At Oxford the feasting lasted for three days; and round the blazing piles healths were drunk to Ormond, Bolingbroke, and James III., and it was not without difficulty that the tumult, in which all manner of outspoken sedition was interchanged by town and gown, was quelled by the joint efforts of the proctor and the mayor. It was high time to have done with the unpopular scheme of revenue.

In their eagerness to overthrow Walpole, his enemies, among whom were reckoned Argyll, Montrose, Stair, Marchmont,

[1] Coxe, on authority of Mr. White, a confidential partisan of the Duke of Newcastle.

Bolton, Chesterfield, Clinton, and Cobham—all holding office during pleasure—had resolved to ask an audience of the Queen, in order to try how far they could work either on her reason or her fear by telling her in the strongest terms the unfitness and the unpopularity of the measure pushed by her favourite, setting forth the hazards of maintaining him, and endeavouring to persuade her of the impossibility there was that he should be able to carry it through. Lord Stair, as spokesman, complained openly that Walpole absolutely governed. No instances more signal were requisite, he said, than the ill-usage to which he himself had been subjected. When he talked of his conscience, the Queen is said to have exclaimed: "Why talk of conscience or the responsibility of representatives?"

The terms of the Earl's remonstrance and the Queen's reproof may have been exaggerated by their cynical and unscrupulous chronicler, but the number of the dissentients, threatened with deprival, and the power they had shown to thwart the Minister in legislation, led them, no doubt, to imagine it possible that their collective protest would have weight if urged with sufficient candour and in time. It is certain, however, that they mistook the spirit of the Queen, who throughout was believed to have sustained Walpole steadfastly to the end of her life.

Ministers were resolved to punish those who had contributed to the defeat of their imposing scheme. Bolton and Clinton were deprived of the Lieutenancies of their respective counties, and Cobham of his Colonelcy of Guards. The Duke ceased to be Ranger of the New Forest, Governor of the Isle of Wight, and Colonel of his regiment. Montrose, appointed Keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland since 1716, was deprived for his independency, to make room for Lord Islay, who sympathised with his brother but did not always side with him. The Earl of Morton replaced Lord Stair as Vice-Admiral of Scotland. Lonsdale became Privy Seal in England, while the Duke of Athol acquired the same dignity in Scotland.

The terms on which Lord Islay personally stood towards his elder brother were not supposed to be the friendliest, but this did not affect the intimacy of their political relations. Their alternate influence was great, and they had a mutual interest in the prevalent belief that they understood one another. The newly appointed Chancellor stuck more closely to the Whigs

and was trusted by Walpole to the very eve of his fall. The Duke oscillated between parties; when he was in good humour and got nearly as much as he wanted, siding with Government; when put out of temper by importunities he could not obtain the means of satisfying, going over to the Opposition and combining with the Tories. But his followers being often hungry had to be often fed, for he had adherents in the House of Commons, all of whom in the well-bred language of debate, and in that of polite Constitutional history, are gravely spoken of when ordered to desert and mutiny as independent representatives of the people.

The most notable object of Ministerial resentment was Chesterfield. By nature incapable of contentment, he had not been long in the Cabinet ere the perfunctory duties of Lord Steward bored him; and even the opportunities at Court for displaying his versatility in the arts of fascination were confined within too narrow bounds. In Council his original suggestions came to nothing, and he discovered, with surprise and mortification, how little real share a younger member of the Cabinet might have in the conduct of affairs. Walpole no longer took the trouble to educate and manage his attachés; and the morbid sensibility of Chesterfield became convinced that he was ill-used. Having held the rank for a season that he desired, why should he waste life in a combination where he was not valued? Others among his colleagues had their specific causes of complaint, and it was believed at the time that he and Dorset and Wilmington mutually stimulated one another to disaffection on the great trial of Ministerial stability. Two of Chesterfield's brothers voted against the Excise Bill without fraternal reproof. What need was there of further testimony? Chesterfield was dismissed, and Walpole seized the opportunity for bringing in the third Duke of Devonshire, to whom he paid unwavering attention to the end. A signal example was thus made of all who had been involved in the late mutiny and desertion, and good things thus sequestered and redistributed would, it was hoped, freshen the zeal of the numerous members of the privileged class to whom a place was an object. The King, it was thought, would have tried to save some of those who were thus displaced; but either he did not choose to try, or if he did he failed to succeed in deprecating the wrath of the baffled Minister, and things went on as before.

Care was taken to assure Diplomatists and Colonial functionaries afar off that all that had occurred would not in the least shake the Administration, and that everything would go on as before. The removals from office of those who had deserted during the fray would prove how mistaken were those "who flattered themselves that this incident would prove the Minister's ruin," and the sanguine Under-Secretary was happy to say that though there had been riots all over the country, there were many on the right side.[1] Ministers had, indeed, pulled through, yet the Paymaster of the Forces owned to Lord Essex that they "had all been put to their stumps; but by the steadiness of the Party in the House of Commons and the firmness of their Master they were now got pretty firmly in their seats again, and he doubted not in the least but that they should continue so."[2]

Scarborough described himself as devoted to a new occupation, "looking after his own affairs, doing a little to improve his seat at Lumley, which, though far north, had great natural beauty. He was sorry for the recent changes," but knew nothing of what was going on in London.[3]

In June, however, the Admiralty fell vacant by the demise of Lord Torrington; and for once Walpole proposed to throw away a great piece of preferment upon a fit and brave man, who was a mere plebeian. Sir Charles Wager had served many years afloat with distinction; he was an upright man, a staunch politician, and a personal adherent of the Minister. So little did he expect such advancement, and so conscious does he seem to have been of the censure his want of social pretensions would entail on his patron, that in his letter accepting it, his sole anxiety was to make out a decent pedigree for himself. The storms he had braved, the fights he had won, and the scars which he bore on his person, would, he well knew, go for nought in comparison of a grandmother or a great-uncle of quality. Nor was he mistaken in thus estimating the chances for and against his being allowed to gain a foothold on forbidden ground. None but a Peer was considered fit by George II. to preside at the Board of Admiralty; and there were not wanting those about him to say disparaging things of the gallant sailor's extraction.

[1] Charles Delafaye to Lord Essex, 19th April, 1733.—*MS.*
[2] H. Pelham, 17th May, 1733.—*MS.*
[3] To Lord Essex, from Lumley Castle, 28th July, 1733.—*MS.*

Luckily for him and for the country, his all-powerful friend was in no temper to be quizzed or cajoled out of the whimsical preference he had just then conceived for vulgar merit: and Wager was appointed.

He had been struck with the frankness and force of Sir Charles Wager's way of dealing with practical difficulties in the Department, where he had for some time been a member of the Board. There were stifled murmurs, of course, and half-audible cries of indignation, at a mere sailor, who was nobody, being put over the heads of everybody of consequence who wanted the post to succeed a member of the privileged House; but that was rather an additional incentive to the angry dictator. He would have him there and none else. One of the few letters of the Admiral that have been preserved, sheds some light on the preference thus shown for a brave and able man without ancestors, green acres, or fashionable friends. Complaints had grown loud of the lawless state of the Mediterranean, where the Spaniards, having long been supreme, could ill reconcile themselves to British competition:

"I perceive," wrote Wager, "from the newspapers, that though the money of the Assoynez ships was delivered, they have found a pretence to stop some of the men-of-war, on account of building a new Portobello, which I suppose is never intended, for the country thereabouts is pretty much alike; but it is as good a reason they find as any to stop the merchants' money. It is said that the money they get from the clergy pays for all their Barbary expeditions, though I do not see that they have any prospect of propagating the faith among the infidels; but by their own accounts they make great slaughter amongst them. Have not the Moors a disadvantage that they do not write newspapers and letters of intelligence? I tell the Duke of Newcastle that if the Spaniards will not supply the garrison of Gibraltar with provisions for their money, we must have it from the Moors, and that upon their own terms, whether it be powder or anything else. The seizing of the Register ship at Campeachy no doubt put the Court of Spain out of humour; but I have always said that, so long as they suffer Garda Costas at the expense of private persons, such Garda Costas (or pirates) will rob and plunder, or they cannot subsist; and if it should be continued—as I hope it will not—we shall be

forced to let loose our rogues from Jamaica and other places, with the like commission, who would soon drive them out of the sea. I myself can remember to have seen it so in the West Indies; but, indeed, it would be difficult to restrain or call in our Garda Costas upon an accommodation, and there being but few Spanish ships to be met with, they would be apt now and then to take one of their own countrymen, as the Spanish Garda Costas have done." What was most provoking was the way in which habitually the Spanish authorities refused to pay compensation for unjust seizures of our ships laden with negroes or other valuable cargo, about which they seemed to banter us, to see how much we would bear. "What can be said on their side for these things I cannot see, or what our merchants or the Parliament will say to it when such a stir, almost threatening us with war, is made for our seizing one trifling ship of theirs, when they have taken fifty of ours without making the least satisfaction. Any ship that is carried in is entirely lost, though acquitted, for the captors appeal, and the ship must lie, and being perishable as well as the cargo, is sold, and the money is put into the King of Spain's coffers, which in those countries have no bottoms, or consume all that is put into them, for I never heard that anything was ever taken out. The Spanish Court think that we have so much advantage by our trade with them that we will bear a great deal rather than have a squabble with them, and, indeed, a trading nation should never be forward to enter into a war with anybody, and I should be very sorry if we should ever be obliged to enter into a war with Spain, because it must be a great prejudice to both nations, let the consequence of the war be what it would. No doubt Spain may have as many ships as she pleases; she has bought some in New England, and I believe she might build some in the River Thames if she pleased; but a nation that has not foreign trade, and a navigation of their own sufficient to raise and employ great numbers of seamen, can never have a sufficient number of seamen of their own growth to have a fleet of ships of war to be depended on. If we were to build ships bigger than we do, we must make proportionable men to handle them. Their arms are not long enough to reach over the main yards to furl the mainsail, but great men are too heavy generally, as well as too great ships. The King of

Prussia's great Grenadiers are too heavy to march, and are always carried in waggons."[1]

The Administration is described as at this period to have been in a state bordering on mutiny, owing to the spread of the anarchic belief that the ascendancy of Sir Robert was shaken, and his reign drawing to a close: for was he not indeed king *de facto*, and, if intellect were any title to govern, king by Right Divine? Devonshire, Grafton, and Newcastle, stood firmly by him; and their station and property, as well as Parliamentary connections, gave them great weight. But in Council they were of little use, and in discussion, none. The chief of the house of Cavendish was an upright and good-natured man, fond of the fine arts and fond of his friends, but fonder of his ease than either. Attached to the Revolution settlement, and proud of the part his family had borne therein, he supported Walpole as he had supported Townshend, for sake of the cause rather than for sake of the man. His Grace of Grafton was a less conspicuous figure, and in every way inferior in importance. With a good manner and a good face, he had only made himself acceptable at Court; and the Princes of the Hanoverian line were glad to have a grandson of Charles II. for Chamberlain. Newcastle had less social but more Parliamentary interest than either. Dorset, why we know not, disliked the First Lord, and if Chesterfield is to be believed, contributed with Wilmington to make him lend his aid against the Excise Bill. Neither the Lord President nor the Viceroy made the mistake of throwing away their places, and their backbitings and intrigues were passed over.

Opposition, elated by victory, sought to press their advantage; and a committee of twenty-one, to be chosen by way of ballot, was proposed, to enquire into the frauds in the Customs, whose prevalence and enormity were said to be unendurable. It would not have been wise or decent to resist such a motion; yet if a majority of opponents were named, the *prestige* of Ministerial strength would be further shaken, and none could tell what expressions of censure upon the heads of departments party spirit might introduce into the report. The night before the committee was to be struck, Walpole harangued his supporters at the Cockpit. He begged of them to waive all personal preferences, and vote as one man for a given list. If they failed

[1] Sir Charles Wager to William Cayley, 12th Nov., 1732.—*M.S.*

to do so, the ascendancy of the Whigs would be overthrown, the Cabinet would be endangered, and, of course, the Protestant succession put in jeopardy. For himself "he had always, to the utmost of his power, obliged, maintained, and favoured that party to whom he could give nothing because he owed everything, and to whom if his situation enabled him to be useful and serviceable he was not conferring obligations, but paying debts, and returning those kindnesses which he had first received. He was not, therefore, pleading his own cause, but the cause of the Whig party. He entreated them, therefore, for their own sakes, for the sake of that Government and the reigning family, for the sake and for the cause of liberty, to exert themselves with spirit and unanimity on that occasion." Such incantations had not lost their charm, and next day the Government list was carried by 294 to 209 votes: eighteen of the Opposition and but ten of the Ministerialists having varied the names on their ballots. This decisive vote put an end to the party struggle for the Session; and it was some time before the discomfited Opposition could rally their forces to a renewal of assault.

In the Upper House the anti-Ministerialists still looked about for ground of quarrel, and for want of better arrayed their strength upon a motion for enquiry into the affairs of the South Sea Company, which being resisted, an animated debate on the 24th May ended in a division in which the numbers were equal, seventy-five on either side. This was the result of several defections, including St. Albans, Manchester, Kent, and Montrose; the Earls of Scarborough, Pomfret, and Burlington; Lords Falmouth, Marchmont, Cobham, Onslow, and others. Other peers were said to have been schooled and tampered with, and Government influence was stretched to the uttermost, but as it would seem, with no graver effect than to procure, after many angry debates, a bare majority of seventy-five to seventy, and with this Walpole was fain to be content. He told the King that the matter was in itself of no importance, and that as to the recusants, he knew the reasons and the price of every one of them, but that the one was not worth considering, nor the other worth paying. But though not himself resentful, he found it impossible to reconcile others to the retention of office by some who had not only voted with Opposition, but signed a protest full of invective against men in power

Government could not look without uneasiness on a state of parties so nearly balanced in the Upper House, and resolved to make some transfers thither from the Lower. Lord Hervey was called up accordingly, and had an addition of a thousand a-year out of the Civil List, and as he had a mind to strengthen the interest of his family in Parliament, one of his brothers was nominated in his stead for Bury. Ickworth thus gained an additional voice in the Legislature, and the Treasury an additional vote. Earl Powlett's eldest son, Lord Hinton, was likewise called to swell the chorus, and made a Lord of the Bedchamber. Two other additions were made to the Peers, but of a very different kind.

Soon after the death of Chief Justice Raymond, the resignation of the Chancellor left the Chief Justiceship and the Great Seal at the disposal of Government. The Attorney and Solicitor General had for some time divided between them the best business in equity; Yorke was likewise eminent in the Courts of Common Law, while Talbot declined practice in that branch of the profession. It was therefore agreed that the Attorney-General should take the Chief Justiceship, with an augmented salary of £2,000 a-year, while the Solicitor-General became Chancellor. The addition of Hardwicke and Talbot to the Ministerial strength in the Lords was not regarded as superfluous to meet the resentful opposition of those who had been recently dismissed. The new Peers, however, were not called upon frequently in 1734 to serve their party, and their reputation as judges was for the time unsullied by the suspicion of political gratitude. Talbot is said to have been the only occupant of the Woolsack who entirely escaped blame in his lifetime or detraction in his grave, and this is the more remarkable because he was certainly believed to owe his early call to the Bar and rapid promotion in the profession to the powerful influence of his family. His rare merit as advocate, jurist, and judge vindicated the preference shown him, and silenced the mutterings of envy ere they became audible to the public ear. In the Cabinet he probably took little part, and no trace is left of anything he said or did during his brief tenure of power as a politician. Of Hardwicke more hereafter.

Upon the whole the Cabinet felt their power sufficiently re-established to put into the King's mouth, at the close of the

Session, words of contumelious reproof to the nation at large for their alleged wrong-headedness in the matter of the excise. "He could not pass by unobserved the wicked endeavours lately made use of to inflame the minds of the people, and by the most unjust representations to raise tumults and disorders, that almost threatened the peace of the Kingdom; but he depended upon the force of truth to remove groundless jealousies, and upon the fidelity of Parliament to frustrate the expectations of such as delighted in confusion. Let it be their care to undeceive the deluded, and to make them sensible of their present happiness, and the hazard they ran of being unwarily drawn by specious pretences into their own destruction."

Chesterfield for a time devoted himself to his bride, the half-sister of the King, and the completion of his house in Audley Street, which he meant to excel in architectural taste that of his contemporaries of high degree. Her father had bequeathed her £20,000, which, with larger sums said to have been left her by her mother, Royalty forgot to pay. A copy of the will of George I. had been confided to Archbishop Wake, as one of the executors, and on the rising of the first Privy Council on the accession was deferentially produced by his Grace, with a request for directions regarding it. George II. took it from the Primate's hands, put it into his pocket without a word, and no one seems to have heard of its contents for several years. But Chesterfield, failing to obtain any official satisfaction regarding the legacy, commenced a suit for its recovery from the Crown. How it might have ended no one in the case ventured to say. It was thought wise to avert legal debate, and when the money was paid the Earl went abroad.

The Parliament of 1727 met for the last time in January, 1734, and both parties occupied themselves in discussing the rival demerits that might sway the susceptibilities of constituencies. The essential sinfulness of keeping up a standing Army was taken for granted on all hands, but the Mutiny Bill, which still embodied the dogma, was no longer seriously endangered. Lord Morpeth moved for leave to bring in a Bill to prevent the deprival of officers in the Army of their commissions by what was called the arbitrary act of the Crown, but what in reality everyone knew was the capricious edict of the Government. His argument mainly turned on the security guaranteed by law to

the private soldier against punishment of any kind without trial by a Court duly constituted, and the inconsistency of those who held commissions being liable to be differently dealt with. In other countries of Europe, which pretended not to equal liberties with ours, they had each some wise law with respect to their Armies. In Holland no officer could be broken but by sentence of a Court-Martial, and in Sweden they had suffered so much from the military caprice of Charles XII., that on his death a statute was passed by the Diet securing justice to their officers in this respect. The Bill was supported by Sir J. Rushout, Mr. Sandys, Sir W. Wyndham, and Pulteney, who from his own knowledge when in office testified that King William being applied to by an angry Minister to dismiss an officer for voting against Government, refused, saying, "I suppose the gentleman voted according to what appeared just and right to him at the time. I know him to be a brave and a good officer, and one who has always done his duty in his military capacity. I have nothing to do with his behaviour in Parliament, and therefore I will not remove him from his command in the Army." Earl Stanhope had actually prepared a Bill to secure this righteous immunity, with the entire approval of George I., but, through some influence not disclosed, he was diverted from his aim, and after his death no more was heard of the measure. The present Bill was resisted successfully by Walpole, Henry Pelham, and Sir W. Yonge, being rejected without a division. A similar motion was made in the Upper House by the Duke of Marlborough, and Bedford was amongst its most zealous supporters. Both of these young gentlemen belonged to the section of discontented Whigs, and followed the lead of Carteret. They differed widely in other respects, the inheritor of Blenheim being in disposition easy, idle, and profuse; the possessor of Woburn prudent, diligent, and parsimonious. The grandson of the Great Captain was ambitious of military fame, and when the long term of peace was at last brought to an end, he insisted upon having the command of a regiment, and at its head fought with distinction at Dettingen. The grandson of Lord Russell preferred politics to arms, and after the overthrow of Walpole occupied in succession many important posts in Administration. On the amendment of Scarborough, the motion was rejected. Carteret preferred to narrow the question to one of personal grievance, and

followed up the rejection of the Bill with an Address that the ill advisers of Bolton's and Cobham's removal should be disclosed. Bathurst, Montrose, and Anglesey dwelt on the assumption of despotic power thus exercised, taking care to disown their belief that it was in any sense fairly to be laid to the charge of Royal whim.

Removals without ostensible or producible cause there had been, indeed, in former days by the mere exercise of Royal prerogative, but removals like those of the two Peers from regimental command there had never been since the fall of the Stuarts. Judges had, in like manner, been cashiered in other days, when no man, in or out of Parliament, felt privileged to ask the reason why, but the Revolution and the laws which were its fruit had put an end to judicial tenancy at will, and Parliament could do nothing more honourable and useful than to afford the same security of tenure to brave men who risked their lives for their country, regardless of the caprice of Executive power, which had ceased to be regal and avowed, and had become Ministerial and inarticulate. Let the example be once set that officers of rank and standing might be in secret judged and condemned, not for any military fault, but for daring to exercise, according to their conscience, the political discretion wherewith they were constitutionally clothed, and a silent terror would be spread over all who bore arms as pernicious in its effect as novel in its contrivance. But remonstrance was in vain. The hitherto forbidden fruit of power was too pleasant to the eye and racy to the palate to be given up. The rank and service of the two nobles who had been victimised rendered the sacrifice more valuable in the eyes of the Cabinet, for thus warning was given to all who held a military commission that they held during the pleasure of the Minister of the day, and not during good behaviour measurable by law. It is worthy of note that no member of the Cabinet who had advised or concurred in the acts complained of spoke in their favour, but left their palliation to adherents who could be charged with no personal knowledge of the transaction, and who were at liberty, therefore, to offer such conjectural excuses as they pleased. Carteret's motion was rejected by nearly two to one, and the question, though revived from time to time, has continued to form a subject even to our own day. Scarborough had been expected, consistently with

his lately-expressed opinions, to oppose the Address on behalf of Bolton and Cobham. To the surprise of many, however, when the debate came on he declared that he had changed his mind, and would do his best to support it. Opposition were greatly surprised, but not half so much as his colleagues, whom he informed that he must quit in order to satisfy his personal scruples on the occasion, and to silence the tongues of those who would impute his change to interest. They tried all methods to shake his resolution, and set the King and Queen to try if they could not dissuade him. With much hesitation he yielded so far at last as to keep his regiment and retain his seat in the Cabinet, but he insisted on relinquishing his place as Master of the Horse. Far from appreciating the susceptibility and self-denial of the Earl, the Dictator, when talking to Hervey of his behaviour, "only laughed, shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and pointed to his forehead," as though madness were the only way of accounting for idiosyncracy so rare. Poor Scarborough could not, indeed, be unconscious that his fastidious sense of honour had simply made him ridiculous in the eyes of the crowd, who, when his resignation was known, set about scrambling for what he had surrendered. The King alone showed any just or generous feeling on the occasion, embracing him frequently, and shedding tears when he went to take leave. He remained staunch to his party, notwithstanding the disgust and chagrin to which they had moved him.

His friends and colleagues were all much concerned at his quitting, and had frequent conferences upon it. The cause was no dislike of measures or persons, but something which gave him disturbance in his own mind. However, he was still just as much among them, and as firm a courtier as ever.[1]

Next year Sir Robert, who was dissatisfied with Dorset's administration in Ireland, offered him the Viceroyalty, proposing to send Stephen Fox (afterwards Lord Ilchester) with him as Secretary. The latter agreed to go; but, to the surprise of everyone, the sensitive and scrupulous Earl declined, saying quietly how much he was gratified by the offer, but that he could not bring himself to accept it lest the world should say he had given up one employment for another more lucrative. Meanwhile, the Duke of Richmond asked to be named his suc-

[1] Pelham to Lord Essex, May, 1734.—*MS.*

cessor, and pressed his suit so eagerly that at length it was granted. His competitor was Pembroke, a man of greater estate and of nobler extraction, who had in the eyes of his friends a paramount claim from having been for years content with a Lordship of the Bedchamber, and a regiment for whose colonelcy he relinquished a troop of Guards that had cost him £10,000. But the ducal coronet of yesterday weighed far more than that of a ninth earl, and his Grace of Richmond possessed beside the superior merit of spending more money on securing seats in the Lower House for his nominees.

When Parliament drew near its end, the Tories, by the advice of Bolingbroke, resolved to press for the repeal of the Septennial Act. In resisting the proposal, the Cabinet were unanimous. It was with them an instinct of self-preservation. The system of administration was for them the best that could be devised, but they did not disguise from themselves or one another that it had been built up and could only be maintained by the organised complaisance of Members of Parliament; and to listen to the lure of annual re-election, plausibly offering fresh materials for purchase, would have been to let go the substance for the shadow. The Septennial Act had realised all the practical benefits its authors anticipated. It had enabled the same party to retain power, under all vicissitudes, for eighteen years. It could not prevent some from dying, and a few from being found out in abuse of official opportunities. That was their affair; but in the main it had proved an effective instrument for the multiplication of pensions, places, honours, and emoluments, and the concentration of the benefits these things conferred in the hands of Cabinet Ministers and their dependents in the two Houses at Westminster. Everybody knew and acknowledged the fact. What, then, was the use of discussing an opposite theory?

Bromley was chosen to advocate the return, as he said, to the ancient ways of the Constitution, resting his proposal on the plea that Jacobitism was, in fact, no more, and that the cause had ceased to operate that in 1716 was held to justify the forsaking of Plantagenet tradition. Wyndham was violent beyond his usual tone, though careful not to transgress the rules of order in denouncing the subserviency of the Court to the arbitrary dictates of the Cabinet, for which impunity could be only hoped

for in a long-lived Parliament. "Let us suppose a man abandoned to all notions of virtue and honour, of no great family, and of but a mean fortune, raised to be chief Minister of State by the concurrence of many whimsical events. Suppose him next possessed of great wealth, the plunder of the nation, with a Parliament of his own choosing, most of their seats purchased, and their votes bought at the expense of the public treasure. Let us suppose this chief Minister pluming himself in defiances because he finds he has got a Parliament, like a packed jury, ready to acquit him at all adventures. Let us further suppose him arrived to that degree of insolence and arrogance as to domineer over all the men of ancient family, all the men of sense, figure, or fortune in the nation; and as he has no virtue of his own, ridiculing it in others, and endeavouring to destroy or corrupt it in all."

Sir William's father-in-law, the Duke of Somerset, had, upon his account, been formerly removed, as the Duke of Bolton was now, for the Parliamentary sin of a kinsman, and the dexterous orator well understood how he could wound his adversary's power in no more dangerous part than in that susceptibility which his high-born colleagues felt at the imputation of being domineered over by him. But the composition of the Government at every period of his career proves that whatever his intellectual ascendancy may have been, the dignities and profits of State were effectually engrossed by persons of that inner social circle, to which men like Walpole were not considered to belong. Wyndham closed his invective by saying that if they felt bound to believe it impossible to guard against such a Minister and such a Prince as he had described, they might, at least, prevent the existence of such a Parliament as would tempt men to evil by affording them impunity. Wyndham was grown old in disappointment, and, like Swift, inveterate in vexation at being excluded, as he could not but feel unjustly, from the position in the State which nature, knowledge, eloquence, and the discipline of experience conspicuously qualified him to fill. Walpole, without fitting the cap to his own head, asked permission to paint a counter portrait in the air. The likeness he painted was obviously meant for Bolingbroke. "He might, with equal justice, speak of an anti-Minister and mock patriot, who never had either virtue or honour, but in the whole course of Opposition was actuated only by motives

of envy against those who might have disappointed him in his views, or might not, perhaps, have complied with all his desires. Suppose him one who thought himself of so great and extensive parts, and of so many eminent qualifications, that he looked upon himself as the only person capable of conducting public affairs, and christening everyone in Administration by the name of blunderer; suppose him lucky enough to have gained over to his party some persons really of fine parts, ancient family, and great fortune, and others of desperate views arising from disappointed and malicious hearts, all these gentlemen moved by him solely, all they said in private and public being but a repetition of what he had put in their mouths, and a spitting out of the venom he had infused into them; and yet not really liked by any even of those who so blindly followed him. Suppose this anti-Minister in a country where he ought not to be, and where he could not have been but by the effect of too much goodness and mercy; yet endeavouring with all his might to destroy the fountain from whence that mercy flowed; suppose him contracting friendships with the Ambassadors of foreign princes at enmity with his own; suppose one of them asking for a secret prejudicial to his native country, and his answering, I will get it you. Upon this it was moved for in Parliament by one of his creatures, and when it was refused, his creatures spread alarm over the nation that the country was in danger from a wicked Minister and corrupt majority. If they could suppose such a one, could there be imagined a greater disgrace to human nature than such a wretch as this?" As for the Septennial Act, it had upon the whole worked well, and the time was unpropitious for reverting to the old-fashioned experiment in Parliament-making when the country was rent by faction. With Triennial Parliaments no policy could be steadily pursued, "as the populace were apt to be too much elated by success and too much dejected by every misfortune; they wavered in their opinions on affairs of State, and were never ong of the same mind; and if their choice were so often renewed, it being impossible to carry on public affairs without the concurrence of the House, Ministers would be obliged to comply, and change their measures as often as the people changed their minds." By 247 to 184 the motion was rejected, and Parliament soon after was dissolved.[1]

[1] 13th March, 1734.

Pelham had previously been through the constituencies, "and met with great success; yet it had been a work of trouble and expense, and what he never met with before—most disagreeable conversation throughout the whole county. He had talked till he was hoarse, and hoped it would end in their satisfaction. Conversation now turned upon foreign wars and home elections, in both of which he foresaw great difficulties."[1] "Sir Robert had gone to Norfolk, and the Duke and his brother were about to set out for Bishopstone, where their time would be spent in nothing but canvassing, drink, and brutality, which Pelham had had so much of that he was quite tired out."[2] Under-Secretary Delafaye played *obligato*. "The Duke of Newcastle, still in Sussex, was treating his voters, of whom he had had no less than 1,200 at dinner with him at Bishopstone."

The energies of Government were now concentrated on the means and methods best fitted for securing a working majority in the Commons.

Sir Robert took up his position at Norwich, commanding in chief the great county of which he was the greatest man. It was a hard battle for the City, the fate of which would decide much else. His excitement is embalmed in the following: "Ten at night, the poll just closed, and the books now casting up; we have carried it for both; the exact numbers you shall know before the post goes. Great expenses made, great threats ushered in the day, but a due provision to repel force by force made it a quiet election. I think the county a more secure game, and the success of this day will not much animate our antagonists."[3]

Yet, after all, it turned out to be only a drawn battle. Old Horace was indeed returned, but his colleague designate was beaten by half-a-dozen votes, and the friends of Bacon exulted not unreasonably. A like result befell the speechless competition at Thetford, where only one Fitzroy and another of the family of Bacon divided the representation. Great Yarmouth proved more responsive to the old rallying cry and sent once more to Westminster a Townshend and a Walpole. But the county was not to be won over from its proclivities, and it

[1] To Lord Essex, 15th Oct. 1733.—*MS.*
[2] *Ibid.*, 21st Nov., 1733.
[3] To Newcastle.—*MS.*

supplied additional strength to Opposition. Ripon still acknowledged the right of Aislabie to nominate its Members, Aldborough and Boroughbridge that of Newcastle to do what he would with their own.

His Grace was never weary of electioneering, and kept up a correspondence with a staff of agents that is truly amazing, nor was his far-reaching range of view confined to diocese or county. He indited three pages of foolscap to his old friend Doctor Sherlock, whom he had raised from the Deanery of Chichester to the Bishopric of Bangor, asking his interposition with three of his former neighbours. Mr. Parks, of Chichester, was troublesome, but might be reasoned with; Mr. Leland, of East Dene, was not unfriendly, but doubtful. "He hoped his Lordship would write a line to him which would fix him." [1] It never seems to have occurred to his Grace to hint a religious motive of any kind for clerical consideration. The Prelate, however, was not wanting in gratitude or slow in letting it be seen. He wrote, forthwith, to his old friends in Sussex, enclosing the letters to his patron to prove that his zeal had not waxed cold, but, "having them marked with the post-mark of Bangor, so that there might be no suspicion of their coming through any other hand but his own." [2] And had he not his reward? Salisbury fell vacant next year and he was translated thereto. What happened further will be presently seen.

Treating had not then been advanced to the dignity of a political offence. It went on without let, hindrance, or qualm, and was estimated chiefly by the prodigality with which it was sustained. Sir W. Ashburnham mentions casually in writing to the Duke that he had entertained all the freeholders in the Rye district, and was about to feed those in the adjoining one, that all might drink Mr. Pelham's health, who was present on both occasions.[3] The Duke of Dorset's influence was put in requisition, and Hastings promised to help. The Paymaster found the people on the whole were hearty, but "they must not name Excise or Sir Robert." The non-voters, too, had their bowls of punch. Pelham was sorry to find "our friend" so unpopular. He wished it might not be so in other counties.[4] It would be of

[1] Newcastle to Bp. of Bangor, 4th Sept., 1733.—*MS.*
[2] 8th Sept., 1733.
[3] September 11th, 1733.—*MS.*
[4] To Newcastle, 18th Sept., 1733.—*MS.*

great use if his Grace could send a pardon for Newman to Chichester. "Now Barabbas was a robber."

All his friends were his "dear brother's servants, and drank his health twenty times a day."

Sir John Shelley, who married Newcastle's sister, was candidate for Arundel against Sir Charles Goring. There were 130 electors, of which they claimed a majority. Lord Wilmington reported as much in detail as a subordinate agent about what he was able to do in the Pevensey district, "inclination as well as gratitude obliging him to use the utmost efforts to promote his Grace's interest."[1]

In a letter, dated, 9th August, 1733, from Mr. Haye, electioneering agent at Glynbourn, to Newcastle, he speaks of the manner in which the Rev. Mr. Whitfield endeavoured to stir up the people against his candidates. "He had been trumpeting the Excise into their ears, and assured the people he would scarce get one vote in the Cliff, and wondered I did not call on him. I believe he is only talking to be bought over, and Sir W. Gage designs to set Ayres and Harrison on him to sound him."

When the fight grew hot, there was no mincing matters. One of the greatest men in the county wrote to headquarters: "I must beg and entreat of your Grace to do Wilkinson's job for him as soon as possible, for he and his two sons are confounded surly about it, and it is of the utmost consequence to us that it should be done immediately, and I must beg, if it is done, that he has his superannuation from 13th November, 1731, when he quitted. I know the difficulties, which at any other time would be reasonable ones, but at present we must lay aside all reason with these chaps, else we shall come off but poorly."[2]

Everywhere placards in athletic type warned the unwary that if they would have "no Excise," they must vote against all who stood with the Pelhams. Lord Ashburnham and the Duke of Somerset were friendly, but the latter undemonstrative. The free and independent at Rye were ready to be all right, but their Member must give a pledge against the Excise. Col. Pelham made no scruple of engaging that they should have that satisfaction;[3] and the Bishop of Chichester and the Duke of Somer-

[1] Sept., 1733.—*MS.*

[2] Richmond to Newcastle. Goodwood, 17th October, 1733.—*MS.*

[3] To Newcastle from Ashburnham, Aug., 1733.—*MS.*

set too; but the industry with which the cry was reiterated throughout the county, and the easiness with which the "stupid creatures" listened and believed, afflicted deeply the Prelate, who was faithful to Government as man could be. He wished "something could be writ in the shape of a dialogue between two farmers or persons of that kind, in a natural, easy, familiar way so as to be intelligible to the meanest capacities, in which the nature of the Excise might be thoroughly explained and the objections fairly discussed and answered; such objections as the country people were taught to make."[1]

Opposition sanguinely reckoned on 250 votes in the new House. They failed egregiously in Scotland, whose Member-makers shrewdly calculated on the superior strength of the Ministry asserting itself for some years to come.

To Lord Islay had been committed the management of the Scotch nobility, who had to elect their sixteen representatives in the new Parliament. Except those actually in Government service very few would declares themselves.

The activity of their opposers had "raised the demands of several whom he must deal with, an evil, he feared, that must be yielded to, especially since there was good reason to hope that it might be kept in bounds. Lord Hopetoun wanted a peerage for his eldest son, and had influence with Lords Findlater and Napier, his two sons-in-law; Lord Strathmore seemed to have forgotten the service done him by Secretary Harrington, and Lord Haddington, though very civil, would not disclose himself, and of him one might say, as Lady Bolingbroke said of Walpole (when pleading for her husband), "*Ou il etait trés poli, et trés negatif.*" Chesterfield wrote sympathetically to Marchmont, who was one of the rejected candidates, suggesting that they (the Opposition) should endeavour to buy a confession from two or three of the purchased peers that they had sold their votes to the Government, and of the fact that they had done so there seems to have been no doubt.

Pelham summed up the result of the elections: "Though we had a great deal of trouble, and more expense than I thought I should ever have been put to, we have the satisfaction that the enemy was beat handsomely, not only in Sussex, but in every borough where my brother or any of our

[1] Bishop of Chichester to Newcastle, 18th August, 1733.—*MS.*

family had the least concern," many of their old friends severing from the others openly.[1] The preponderance of supporters in the Upper House, though considerable, was hardly beyond doubt. On the eve of the Session of 1735, one hundred and six lords, spiritual and temporal, were invited to meet at Secretary Harrington's to learn the legislative intentions of the Cabinet. The list included the two archbishops, twenty-two of their suffragans, thirteen dukes, and thirty-four earls, &c., of whom fifty attended.[2]

George II. grew impatient of mere prominence in the picture of still life hitherto presented by the Court of England since his accession. Nature, he often suspected, had meant him for a great general. The lust of war, not for the sake of territorial acquisition, for of this he did not dream, but for the sake of fighting as classical education taught every great King he ought to fight, stirred his soul. What would his contemporaries of France and Austria or Poland think of him if he remained for ever shut up thus tamely in his island paddock, never daring to clear territorial fences, or make a Royal rush in any direction? Even his hated kinsman, Frederick of Prussia, would look down upon him if he did not form some offensive alliance, sack some city, or cause a respectable number of some neighbour's soldiery to bite the dust. Then there was the martial honour of England to be maintained, which Providence had entrusted to his keeping. How could he justify himself to his loyal subjects if he never led any of them out to be slaughtered in the good old style of his predecessors? What his Majesty's loyal subjects would have said upon the point had they been consulted must be left to surmise. Voice potential in the matter they had none, their casual and incoherent efforts to make themselves heard appearing to attract little notice in any quarter where the question of desirableness or undesirableness of war was seriously discussed. Sir Robert, indeed, in his loose, general, give-and-take way of talking, when he had exhausted other topics in his conferences with the King, used frequently to say something about the distaste of the multitude for standing armies and taxes; but this he did not in a vulgar or low-spirited tone as though he really thought too much of such a consideration, or

[1] To Essex, 23rd May, 1734.—*MS.*

[2] Mem., Newc. *MSS.*

could be guilty of the mean affectation of caring what the flock thought of the shears. He was too shrewd a man to put on a mask which even his Majesty would have seen through. Nevertheless, Walpole was sincerely averse to war, and in a sense of his own took into account popular antipathy thereto as a matter not wholly undeserving of consideration. He was at the head of the uppermost section of the governing class—without the name, but to all intents and purposes King: what could he have more? Or what could they whose spokesman and chief he was, if they but clearly discerned their true interest as a class? They were a minority all powerful for the time being, while they held together by the monopoly of office and the possession of seats in the Legislature, and in the social influence attached to great landed possessions. What could they have more? They might have much less, and they would, if by going to war they provoked France again to lend her aid to the exiled Stuarts, and furnished at home a rallying cry to the numerous sections of discontent, now powerless because they had no aim in common. The measurement of future contingencies, however, is a gift so rare, and demonstration of their most certain realities is so much beyond the capacity of ordinary men, whether of high or low degree, that the First Lord found, even amongst his colleagues, few to comprehend his policy of peace, and fewer still to back him in maintaining it. Newcastle knew not how to refuse assent in the Royal hankering after war. Unable to realise by anticipation the perplexities and perturbations it would entail especially on himself as Secretary of State, he only shrank from thwarting too openly the desire he saw so strong in the Royal mind. He knew that George II. disliked him, and he had neither the wit to discern nor the courage to express what was best for the order to which he belonged, and as one of which alone he could ever have obtained, or ever held the portfolio of Secretary of State. It may be that already he began to entertain views on the succession to the first place in the Ministry, and that his timidity over-estimated the influence which the Court might at some unforeseen juncture exercise, and that he under-estimated his own. When driven to the wall, as we shall hereafter see, he could set Royalty at defiance and prevail. But his nature bid him shun the conflict and distrust the issue; and sometimes at the Cabinet and at his own table

he inconsistently muttered the bellicose sentiments of the Palace, for which he was contemned by Sir Robert as a truckler, and not much trusted or loved by the King for his pains.

The other Secretary, Lord Harrington, neither took any active part in debate nor exercised any sway in Council. After concluding the Treaty of Seville he had come home with a high character for diplomatic skill, and great things were expected of him. Thenceforth, he seems, however, to have given himself up to indolence and pleasure, content with what he had.

The Queen once, in speaking of him, said, "There is a heavy insipid sloth in that man that puts me out of all patience. He must have six hours to dress, six more to dine, six more for his mistress, and six more to sleep; and then if now and then he borrows six of those turns to do anything relating to his office, it is for something that might be done in six minutes, and ought to have been done six days before."

Grantham made a point of humouring the King while in his presence, and of passively acquiescing in the opposite views of the Ministry at other times, not so much from any design to play false as from incapacity to play clear, and a thoroughbred indifference as to all theories and opinions that took trouble to argue.

Hervey, by his own account, always combated the Royal tendencies to war, and kept Sir Robert advised of all that threatened to stimulate them. He kept the favour of the Queen, who made him her confidant in almost everything, and insisted upon arguing the Balance of Power question with him over and over again. Though often vanquished in the controversy, and sometimes vexed, she so little resented his contumacy, that she persuaded the King, about this time, to add £1,000 a-year to his pay as Vice-Chamberlain, which he said gave another handle to his enemies, amongst whom he reckoned Frederick, Prince of Wales. He lost no opportunity of urging upon the Queen that the true interest of her family, as well as of the nation, lay in the preservation of peace, and in retaining as long as possible the position of umpire between the contending States of Europe.

When Harrington, to please George II., indited a dispatch to Robinson at Vienna, giving hopes of England's coming into the Imperial purpose to place the Elector of Saxony on the

Polish Throne, and, in alliance with Spain and Tuscany, to humble the pretensions of France, Walpole took care to make Newcastle write in a contrary sense, which the English Ambassador understood to be that which he was to obey; and the First Lord himself took care to tell the Austrian Minister in England that *he* had no intention of being driven or drawn into any species of hostility, or further than the strictest punctilio of neutrality. It was impossible to keep all this from the knowledge of the Court of Versailles month after month, as the growing antagonisms of the Continent kindled and died down under changing circumstances, and ever and anon blazed out again and threatened to wrap all Christendom in flame. M. Chauvelin bitterly complained of the insincerity of diplomatic England, and laboured, not without success, in weaning the States-General from their old alliances, and frightening their merchant Statesmen at the risk they would run if undefended Flanders should be overrun by the armies of France. To countervail the effect of these threatenings, Horace Walpole was specially employed to expostulate with his old friend, Cardinal Fleury, on the folly and mischief of war with the Empire, and though he failed to nerve his Eminence into any definite pledge of a general kind, he succeeded in getting him to agree to a convention guaranteeing the neutrality of the Low Countries in all events. Louis XV. was, however, too wrapt in the spell of depraved influences to be relied on to keep his Minister's word, or to resist the corrupt impulses that were steadily impelling him to take the field, and at the end of 1734 the prospects of peace seemed more hopeless than ever.

In the course of the autumn, the Vice-Chamberlain learnt that the aged Bishop of Winchester drew near his end; and, wishing the advancement of Hoadly, with whom he had long been intimate, he lost no time in apprising him of the expected vacancy. "Willis is certainly dying, and this messenger comes to charge you on this critical conjuncture not to let your natural modesty and hitherto insuperable awkwardness in solicitation so far get the better of your prudence as to induce you, Mahomet-like, to sit still and fancy the mountain of preferment will walk to you to Salisbury: come up immediately, and, in the meantime, since application must be

made, I need not tell you where (you know the K.'s two ears[1] as well as I do) apply to them both; and if I may advise, *act* as if you were not secure, and *write* to them as if you were. Be sure you exert yourself on this occasion, and remember you are now shaking that die upon the cast of which the future happiness of your life depends; the odds are on your side, but, as long as there is a possibility of losing, nobody with so great a stake depending can play too cautiously. Do not talk to me of security from former promises; I know Court promises too well to believe they are ever kept, though ever so solemnly made, without being claimed; the best Court paymaster must be dunned, and dunned a good deal—they pay few debts for the honour of paying them; their memories, too, are abominable—I mean to debts of gratitude, not of resentment. Remember how you failed of Durham—at least that you were told you failed from silence. Write therefore now, come, speak, dun, and behave not as your laziness inclines you, but as your interest directs, as common prudence dictates, as your friends advise, and as what you owe to yourself and family requires."[2]

The Spiritual Lord of Salisbury replied: "All the entertainment you have ever given me by your former letters (which has been in truth as great as one ought in reason to wish for) bears no proportion to the real pleasure I had in reading yours this morning. The kind and good advice you give me is the advice of all the packets from my friends at London, and of every heart except my own. But I now yield up that, and am resolved to come up to London, and, as our friend Mr. C. particularly advised me, if this case happened, to write to the Queen herself as well as to Sir Robert, from both of whom I have had an express assurance of the thing as if one of their messengers with a post-boy before him and a greyhound upon his breast were sent down to me upon the prospect of a vacancy with a strong letter in form. As I have the most express promises given and renewed without my asking, to claim upon, I can more easily prevail upon myself to work for myself than I could in a former case in which that particular happiness was

[1] The Queen and Walpole.

[2] Hervey's "Memoirs," Vol. I., p. 442.

wanting. I should be glad of stronger nerves and more courage."[1]

Winchester was reluctantly conferred upon Hoadly. The King did not speak a word when he kissed hands; the Queen, after finding she could not put him off, told the Bishop she was now glad to see him advanced as high in dignity and profit as he had long been in merit and reputation, and assured him of the pleasure this occasion gave her of proving to him the sincerity of all her former professions.

For the vacant see of Gloucester, Chancellor Talbot recommended the favourite Chaplain of his father. Rundle's ecclesiastical views were said to waver as willows in the wind. At Oxford a zealot for the dreams of Whiston regarding primitive simplicity in the Church, resting on the antiquity of certain patristic writings,—when made Prebend of Durham he was said to have discovered that these authorities were but of the fourth century. "Make him Dean of Durham," exclaimed his old leaders, "and they will not have been written till the fifth century." By some he was suspected of leaning to Arianism; but as this could not be proved, the Bishop of London charged him with having spoken disrespectfully of Abraham some fourteen or fifteen years before, which one of his clergy, a worthy man, was ready to prove on oath.

He had no one himself to recommend, nor any shibboleth to offer of episcopal promotion, but he would beg the King at all events to give them a Christian. The controversy grew every day more animated. Many pamphlets were written and sermons preached on the subject, some of them vainly appealing to the judgment of the absent King, others reflecting on the supposed predilection of the Queen Regent to the doctrine of Samuel Clarke. Her pride and her philosophy alike were wounded by sarcasm and insinuation it was impossible to repel; and Walpole, who understood her feelings, set himself the task of getting rid of the difficulty by inducing Talbot to postpone the claims of his friend. He agreed that Rundle should be made a Dean, and if the see of Derry fell vacant, as was soon expected, to give it him by way of compensation. This was soon afterwards done.

The Queen, however, obtained an Irish mitre for a very differ-

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs," I., 444.

ent man. When Berkeley's fame in combating materialism was comparatively young she had been foiled in securing him capitular wealth and distinction, but Caroline was only Princess then, and Berkeley had to be content with a less lucrative preferment. Now that she was Queen, Walpole took care that she should have her way, and the Dean of Derry was made Bishop of Cloyne, where, the world forgetting, by the world almost forgot, he went about doing good, irrespectively of creed, and casting out the devils of intolerance wherever he found them.

George II. was glad to spend the latter half of 1735 in Hanover, where the nominal cares of his kingdom and of European diplomacy encroached little on his personal pleasures, and the Queen was left Regent of the Kingdom with her wonted responsible counsellors. The Duke of Dorset returned from Ireland in September, leaving Primate Boulter, Chancellor Wyndham, and Speaker Boyle Lords Justices, and the business of Administration was conducted for the next two years by them, under the direction of Newcastle as Secretary of State.

The confidential despatches of M. Chauvigny, French Ambassador in England in 1735, were constantly opened, and their contents reported by Walpole to the King and Queen, upon whom they reflected severely. The warrants to the Postmaster-General probably were signed by one or other of the Secretaries of State. M. Chauvigny lived on terms of well-known intimacy with Pulteney, Carteret, Bolingbroke, and other chiefs of Opposition; and when, through the mediation of England, peace was secretly negotiated between the Courts of Vienna and Paris, the English Ministry deemed it requisite that the French Envoy in London should be kept in ignorance to the last of what was in contemplation. This was so effectually done that when the news of the proclamation of the preliminary armistice arrived, he and his Parliamentary friends were equally taken aback, and forced to admit that they had been outwitted egregiously.

Notwithstanding the signal ability, energy, and tact displayed by Opposition, they were almost invariably outvoted in the Peers by two to one, and in the Commons by considerable majorities. Unprecedented efforts had been made at the general election to carry some seats previously occupied by adherents of the Administration, and a few seats were lost, and notwithstanding £60,000[1] were lavished by the First Lord of

[1] Etough.

the Treasury, out of what funds the gossips of the time are not agreed. Yet upon the first question of confidence raised in the new Parliament, the representatives of the dominant section proved more numerous by eighty than their rivals; and in the Upper House a majority of eighty-seven to thirty-five decisively attested their continued preponderance. A petition from the Scotch Peers who had not been elected, complaining of the prodigal use of corruption on the late occasion, was eloquently supported by Carteret, Argyll, Cobham, Clinton, Chesterfield, Marchmont, and Burlington. But their indignation availed nothing. A majority of the great families had renewed their lease of power, and re-let the Exchequer to the best working tenant they knew they could find, on the old terms, namely, that he would strictly preserve the patronage for them and those whom they honoured with their friendship. He had liberty to do and say many things which they would not have done. He might talk liberality to the Dissenters, and, as an inducement to their support, promise them a repeal of the Test Act; but when it came to the point of keeping his word, the paramount obligations due to creed and class compelled him, as he averred, to abet the denial of what he confessed to be justice, and by his help the Municipal outlawry of Nonconformists was maintained.[1]

A Bill to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts was brought in by Mr. Plumer, M.P. for Herts, at the request of the three denominations, and supported by all the influence they could command; but it was opposed by Walpole, who acknowledged frankly his coincidence with its principle; and a debt of gratitude his Administration owed to its promoters; but declared the time was inopportune, and that he must resist the second reading. It was consequently rejected by more than two to one, and the proposal was not renewed for many years.

After hope long deferred, the heart of the Dissenters grew sick, and Dr. Chandler, as one of a deputation that waited on Walpole, asked if he thought the time would ever come for realising the expectations he had repeatedly bid them entertain. The party leader, who for twenty years had polled their suffrages for his nominees at county and city elections, by the profession of personal sympathy and zeal for their civic enfranchisement, was

[1] Debate on motion to repeal the Test Act, March 1736.

stung by the justice of their long-stifled reproach, and forgetting his usual reserve, he replied that if they required a specific answer he would give it them in a word—Never! Conscious of the damage to his interest his ruthless candour was likely to cause, he clutched at the first opportunity that offered for showing the numerous but not least influential body of the Nonconformists that he could and that he would help them to a remedy for a practical grievance of which they bitterly complained.

From peculiar scruples of conscience the Quakers persistently refused to pay tithes or Church rates, and mutely submitted rather to have their goods distrained. The amount due by a wealthy merchant was annually discharged by the sale of a single piece of furniture; and the liability of the humble trader was defrayed by the unresisted seizure of the first articles of drapery or hardware that lay to hand. To prevent oppressive aggravation of the proceeding, power had been given by statute to two local magistrates to adjudicate in all cases under £10 on payment of a trifling fee; but the superior Courts had not been divested of their right to hear formal and elaborate plaints, which, though undefended, enabled lawyers to charge heavy costs; and the opportunity was frequently resorted to where poor men were unable to bear the additional burthen. Some who indignantly resisted the exaction were said to be ruined in their business, and some, it was said, had died in the poorhouse, or in prison.[1] Petitions were presented to Parliament for redress, and a Bill for the purpose was warmly supported by Sir Robert, and carried by a majority of one hundred on the third reading.[2] But in the Upper House is was successfully opposed by Gibson, whom he had promoted to the See of London, and others on whose concurrence he implicitly relied. Argyll, Richmond, Pembroke, and Hervey were the only Members of the Cabinet who supported it, while Grafton, Newcastle, Scarborough, Godolphin, Wilmington, Talbot, and Hardwicke voted against it, and others stayed away.[3] Walpole was not prepared for the result, which mortified him deeply. He had promised his numerous and influential supporters among the Society of Friends in Norfolk, that this very moderate and partial favour should be

[1] Gough, "History of the People called Quakers," IV., 285.
[2] 30th April, 1736.
[3] Parliamentary History, May, 1736.

secured them by statute; and confident of his power in keeping his word, he had allowed the Bill to be drawn so carelessly, and to be so little amended in the Commons, that its defects afforded grounds of special cavil to its learned critics in the Lords. Of the worth or wisdom of these objections he took small heed; but to be beaten by a majority of his own Cabinet and outvoted in Parliament by men many of whom he had ennobled, was a mortification of which he had not dreamed, and which he took no pains to conceal.

The centripetal tendency of power began to show itself every year more and more in the dispensation of patronage. A vacancy being caused in the Treasury by the advancement of Sir W. Yonge to the Secretaryship of War, more than one of the Government supporters urged the claim of Winnington, who by common consent was deemed one of the ablest and most accomplished politicians of his time. He had returned himself to Parliament for the family borough of Droitwich, and espoused the Ministerial side, on which upon all important occasions we find him prominently contending. In the fashion of the time he openly jested at public principle; and his versatility, when his ambition was not gratified, is spoken of by his contemporaries as a foible so natural as hardly to merit the name of fault.[1] He was a Lord of the Admiralty, and would have been content with this step of promotion, but Sir Robert made the excuse of there being too many competitors for it, whose pretensions were fair. To disappoint them all, he gave the vacant post to his own son-in-law, Lord Cholmondeley, as he had given the Lieutenancy of Devonshire to his son, Lord Walpole. Godolphin had £5,000 a-year as Groom of the Stole, an office he did not like, and which he was ready to forego for a pension, if he could have a patent entailing his honours upon collateral heirs. To console Pembroke for being compelled to give way to Richmond, he was given the Gold Key at a reduction of £2,000 a-year, which made the retiring pension of the out-going Earl, who got what he wished regarding the descent of his title. The public purse was thus nobly saved from further encroachment, and everybody was pleased, except the King, who complained that Sir Robert was always teasing him to do things that were disagreeable to him; nor was it until the Minister made it a point on which he could not be refused that

[1] See his epitaph by Sir C. H. Williams.

the unusual patent was granted. Not long afterwards Lord Lonsdale withdrew from public life; and the King, to save the pension to Godolphin, suggested that he should be made Privy Seal. Walpole, who never forgot his having been first brought into office under his father, and who knew that he could entirely depend on him, at once agreed to the proposal; and for some time the Civil List had the benefit of the saving.

Bubb Dodington held a Lordship of the Treasury, and the chief place in the household of the Prince of Wales, whose political conduct he had the credit in a great measure of guiding; and as this was often very unfriendly to Government, the Member for Melcombe naturally incurred the reproach of playing fast and loose with his Parliamentary patrons. He was a man of fortune but not of family; and his ambition in life being to die a peer (which just on the end of it he finally accomplished), and having no political convictions whatever, he attached himself in turn to every party that he thought rising, and in turn forsook them all when his over-complacency failed to achieve what he wanted.

Pulteney, for some cause which has never been clearly explained, refused to make his confederate's restoration to his privileges and honours a condition of the coming triumph of the party; and Bolingbroke, seeing that his ten years' service in the siege of power was to be allowed to go without acknowledgment or just share of the spoil, resolved to shake the ungrateful dust from off his feet, and withdraw from political contention for the residue of his days. Gathering up the best and brightest thoughts he had desultorily squandered in past years into one splendid trophy of historical research and rhetoric, he published in 1734-5 his Dissertation on the State of Parties, which, containing all his distinctive doctrines and the most vital of his memorable invective, he left as his testament to the crowd of unbelievers whom he had so long dazzled, but found himself unable to convert. He quitted England in 1735, not until he became convinced that "some schemes which were then on the loom, though they never came into effect, made him one too many, even to his most intimate friends."[1]

There was a rumour in town of Bolingbroke's having suddenly absconded and fled, to prevent a Parliamentary censure,

[1] Marchmont Papers.

which his many severe writings would have drawn upon him;[1] but there seems, after all, little, if any foundation for the report, which, if true, would probably have been confirmed by a recurrence to legal proceedings, trusting to their success in his absence; and of these no trace remains.

Harrington had made himself acceptable to George II. in ways that are not recorded. A voluptuary without scruples, and one whom the prejudices of family and class served for opinions, he had the distinctive merit of conformity that looked like conviction, and was consequently ready now and then to gratify stalemated Majesty with the idea that he could still make a move after all. Walpole was not so undeft a player as to allow this to happen; but when he was at Houghton, and Royalty was at Göhrdt, and nobody there who knew the Cabinet truth and would tell it, the Secretary of State would sometimes frame a proud-looking despatch in the manner of King William or his forbears in other times, signifying practically little more than that he wished it to be borne in mind that he, the Elector-King, was somebody, and meant to make his voice heard. Harrington probably never meant that he should; but his compliance marked the difference in his master's mind between himself and his blunt admirers at home, whose candour was almost harder than their obstinacy. For the rest, Harrington passed the autumn in the lazy and luxurious ease that best suited him and least disturbed the indolent but irritable temper of the King. Their tastes and habits were congenial; and to the Earl it was said that Madame de Walmoden owed her introduction at the secluded autumnal Court. The singular influence she subsequently acquired, and her unexampled, if not unimitated, abstinence from abusing countless opportunities to factious or individual purpose, leave little room to doubt that she possessed an intellectual nature very different from those with whom her name has been ordinarily associated.

When at length it became necessary to nominate a successor to Archbishop Wake, the early condemnation of Hare was pleaded effectually in bar of his promotion; and his ducal patron had no longer the willing ear of the chief Minister. They had had more than one serious difference of late. Newcastle had, in fact, gone all lengths with Carteret with a view to bring-

[1] Southwell to Coghill, 16th January, 1735.—*MS.*

ing him into administration without the permission or knowledge of Walpole; and in doing so had so far misled the Earl as almost to beguile him into acts of secession from his party. Gibson and Sherlock were not to be forgiven for the part they had respectively taken in compassing the defeat of the Quakers' Relief Bill; and thus it came to pass that Potter was preferred above them all for no other assignable reason than his having in language as decorous as the subject would allow, written for the use of schools the "Loves of Olympus."

CHAPTER XIV.

PARLIAMENTARY PEDIGREE OF PITT.

1735.

The Pitts in Parliament—The Great Interloper—Tom Pitt for Old Sarum—Law Suits with East India Company—Governor of Madras—The Pitt Diamond—Robert Pitt—His Son the Future Statesman—Flatters the Court Ineffectually—Carteret, Pulteney, and Pitt Organise Opposition—Civil List of the Prince—Sir J. Barnard's Financial Proposals—Death of Queen Caroline.

ERE the conflict of parties was resumed at St. Stephen's a change had taken place in the Members' Roll fraught with results more notable than perhaps any other of the time. Thomas Pitt, returned for both Old Sarum and Oakhampton, had elected to sit for the latter, and returned his nephew William, then a cornet of Horse, for the former. The name of Pitt was not unknown in Parliamentary records. Worcestershire sent one of the family in 1654 to the United Parliament called by Cromwell for the three Kingdoms, and when the experiment of Legislative Union failed, Leominster, Weobley, and Wareham returned three of the name to the House of Commons that welcomed back the King. In the days of evil that ensued they seem to have taken no public part. The elder branch of the family inherited the Manor of Strathfieldsay from a Comptroller of the Green Cloth to Elizabeth and James I., and prudential marriages had enabled them considerably to extend their possessions. The younger branch was less fortunate save in their capability for speculation and adventure, destined to make the name eventually known throughout the world.

In the twilight of Indian colonisation, when the first Chartered Company were struggling to establish on the Coromandel coast, and at the mouths of the Hooghly, a practical monopoly

of trade, private adventurers frequently tried, often with golden success, to break the covenanted blockade, sometimes without, and oftener with, complicity on the part of local agents and officials. In the records of the Councils of Surat, Bengal, and Madras, the names occur of Taylor, Dorrel, Mathias Vincent and his cousin Tom Pitt, described as "a fellow of a haughty, huffying, daring temper," who was supercargo for more than one ship of the "Interlopers," as they were called. Their vessels, freighted at home with merchandise suited to Eastern tastes and wants, usually contrived to elude the Company's sparse and venal coastguard, and under various pretences to reload with precious cargoes unmolested, to the vexation and envy of the half-hearted and slack-handed authorities. These exploits were so notorious and provoking that the Court of Directors, being informed that Thomas Pitt and Edmond Taylor were on board the *Crown* intending for Bengal, sued out a writ *ne exeat regno*, until their suit in Chancery against them should be determined. The *Crown* lay in the Thames with Pitt on board, wherefore they ordered one of their captains to make all imaginable haste to get before him into the Bay of Bengal so as to make good their great design of preventing the mischief that might be done by that hardy Interloper. Lest their nimble foe should attempt to rescue his accomplice Vincent, they directed that a corporal and twenty men should be sent from Fort St. George to strengthen their representatives at the Hooghly, and if Pitt should land they were "to secure his person, whatever it cost, and when they got him into their custody they were to be sure to hold him fast, he being a desperate fellow, and one that they feared would not stick in doing any mischief that lay in his power.[1] But the Interlopers arrived before the defenders, landed in great state, set Vincent at their head, engaged the Dutch and the natives in their cause, enlisted Rajpoots, Peones, and Portuguese, declared the old Company was broke and that they were come to found a greater factory for a new Company, by whom a fresh Purwannah had been obtained. After six months' struggle the Covenanted Service reasserted their ascendancy, and the Interlopers set sail again for England with more valuable investments than ever. Criminal informations were filed against Vincent, Pitt, and Dorrel, at Westminster, and they were held to bail for £40,000

[1] Documents appended to a diary of Sir W. Hedges. Ed. by Col. Yule.

each. Litigation flagged, however, while the contrabandists continued to drive a profitable business in the best Indian goods, over-buying the factors of the Company on the Hooghly and under-selling them on the Thames. In a notable case Chief Justice Jefferies held that the exclusive patent of the Company to trade to the East was good, and that judgment must go accordingly. The decision ruled the other cases pending, and thereupon led to compromise and settlement, of which the public heard nothing. But no little sympathy was shown by wealthy and intelligent merchants for the cause asserted by the aggressors as that of free trade against monopoly, a system which had been going out of favour in the city since the days of Elizabeth. Pitt was sentenced to pay a fine of £1,000, which was given by Government to the Company in consideration for the wrongs they had sustained, but some time after their astute adversary persuaded the Directors to remit more than a moiety thereof.[1] Fast sailing craft no longer raced with the Company's vessels of broader beam in the Indian Seas, and their irrepressible owners turned their attention to ventures of a different kind.

Seats in Parliament, like most other public trusts, under the Restoration had become marketable. The tradition of Triennial dissolutions had almost died out; and the substitute of Septennial elections was as yet unknown. A small borough that could return two Members for an indefinite period to Westminster was considered worth money by a neighbouring proprietor whose family longed for recognition at Court; by a city merchant ambitious of a baronetcy; or by a barrister in growing practice, who saw no shorter way of access to the Bench. Irish peers, who desired appointments abroad or elevation to the rank of English nobles, could desire no readier method of becoming marriageably known, and the Treasury, though it continued ostensibly to recognise the right of a majority to call it to account, laid out no inconsiderable sums in hedging against casualties at St. Stephen's. In addition to all these there came gradually another set of bidders for legislative rank. Men without grandmothers of quality or green acres of wide extent, professional celebrity, or wounds incurred in war, half hid by decorations, began to offer themselves as purchasers of Parliamentary seats, and privateering free traders, checked in their

[1] Court Book, 30th November, 1687.

hazardous ventures at sea, betook themselves in several instances to this newer mode of investing capital. Mathias Vincent, cousin of Thomas Pitt, who from being chief of the Company's Agents at Balasore had become the most formidable of their subverters there, came home half as rich as a Nabob, bought his way into the representation of Lostwithiel, one of the smallest of the Cornish boroughs, and his kinsman made a bargain with the owners of Old Sarum whereby he became one of its Members in the Convention that elected William and Mary King and Queen. Having taken part in this memorable act of State he was unseated on petition for some unwary proceeding which subsequent experience enabled him to avoid; and he was obliged to resort to the adjacent city of Salisbury instead until the next dissolution, when he made Old Sarum safe for the future. He seems to have had no gift of Parliamentary talk, and perhaps he found Parliamentary privilege less available for purposes whereon his mind was set than he anticipated. But in 1693 the zest for unlicensed enterprise in the far East revived, and the Member for Salisbury undertook once more in concert with others to set at nought the prohibitions imposed on private trade with Hindoostan. Sir John Goldsborough, Chief Governor of the Company's settlements, warned their factors at Fort St. George and Vizagapatam that "Tom Pitt and Allen Catchpole in the *Seymore* were come again to try what could be made of a run thither. He had writ to the Nabob and King's Dewan at Dacca, and to the Governor at Hooghly to let them know who Pitt was, and how he stole thither without leave. He would do the utmost he could to hinder his being permitted to trade." From the Interloper himself he acknowledged the receipt of a letter threatening to divulge the circumstances of the Company if he was obstructed in his way. As if he (the Governor) was to be frightened thereby. "If," he replied, "you have any license from the King of England or the Honourable Company to trade in those parts show it to me and I shall readily obey it; but if you refuse such authentic satisfaction I must take it for granted that you have no such power, but are come hither either a-pirating or at best Interloping, and I shall deal with you accordingly."[1] The lawless competitors in Indian wares disregarding,

[1] Governor Goldsborough to Captain T. Pitt. From Chuttanutte, 1st November, 1693.

however, all warnings off, established themselves at Hooghly, and won the goodwill of the natives as buyers on better terms, by paying ready money.

Meanwhile the Company's prospects at home visibly drooped; their stock continued to fall, and projects of rivalry more and more gained public attention. The Directors lost courage in their contests with those whom they denounced as poachers on their once secure preserves; and a bustling minority in the Court half-worried, half-won their colleagues over to the expedient of accommodating differences with their tormentors. Even before Tom Pitt's last expedition to Bengal they had entertained the notion of absorbing the adverse interests of the invaders and incorporating the chief of them in the Company; and when he returned triumphant to enjoy the fruits of his exploits, the prudence of agreeing with an enemy in the gate stifled the memory of resentment for past wrongs. An opulent and independent man, he was now as little disposed to be controlled by a constituency as by a Company; and easy though his seat for Salisbury had been, he resolved to revert to the decayed suburb whence he first took his title of M.P. He purchased from Lord Salisbury the Manor of Stratford-under-the-Castle, which included the half-score burgage tenures that nominally returned two Members to Parliament; and an old-fashioned residence called Mawarden's Court, above the entrance to which he placed the inscription—*Parva sed apta domino.* There, however, he took up his abode, and in 1695 returned himself one of the representatives of Old Sarum; the lingering holder of a smaller portion having enough interest in the neighbourhood to make it worth while allowing him to retain the other seat.

So notorious had the progress of jobbing of this kind become that it was made a theme of vehement, though vain, denunciation. Some places still called towns, "whose charters remained though the towns themselves seemed to be dead, were so mean and contemptible that nothing remained of them but a despicable village, with the ruins of what they had been. It would be but reasonable that the charters and privileges should die with them; for when they were depopulated and desolate there could be no need of any person to represent them. Yet Bramber, Old Sarum, Stockbridge, Gatton, Queenborough, and

others sent up gentlemen to represent beggars, and had more money spent at some of their elections than all the land in the parishes was worth."[1] But, as safe investments, such boroughs continued to be at a premium throughout subsequent generations, and Tom Pitt lived to see his purchase enjoyed by more than one of his family.

Negotiations with his old censors in Leadenhall Street ended in his appointment by them as an able person duly qualified to take charge of the Presidency of Fort St. George.[2] He was specially instructed for the "defeating of Interlopers, and wherein his advice might be helpful; and this he undertook to do." He kept his word, and made his authority felt by all who dared to imitate his former example.

A salary of four hundred a-year with allowances[3] would not have tempted the Member for Old Sarum to accept a troublesome charge in the far East had not the position held out the promise of untold advantages. He was to be free to trade as a merchant on his own account in what and with whom he pleased, as well as to deal in the capacity of factor for the Company, and he retained his post for eleven years. Far from concealing his activity in private enterprise, he took his eldest son Robert with him, with special leave to engage in the business of a merchant at Fort St. George; it was well understood that father and son had ventures in common, and their investments were shipped in the same vessels that bore those of the Company. Preceding Governors had grown rich by the use of mercantile opportunities, and no one doubted that the great Interloper, won over to the side of authority, would improve on their example. His private letters enumerate the varied produce the Pitts sent to England, and the variety of wares and fabrics imported by them in exchange. His searching eye discerned a source of profit easier and something more exquisite still. He heard there were large diamonds in the country for sale, which he encouraged their owners to bring to Madras, promising to be their chapman. Janchund, one of the most eminent diamond merchants, came in December, 1701, and brought with him a large rough stone,

[1] Defoe, "The freeholder's plea against stock-jobbing elections of Parliament men."

[2] Court Book, 24th Nov., 1697.

[3] Court Book E. I. Company, 2nd Feb., 1698.

which the Governor bought for 48,000 pagodas. Once possessed of the treasure, he lost no time in transporting it to a place of greater safety.

Content with five years' acquisitions in trade, Robert Pitt went home in the autumn of 1702, charged with many austere precepts for his future guidance and entrusted with the keeping of the Great Diamond, about which nothing was then to be made known, but whereof the world was to know all in due time. Robin was enjoined to spend three years at Oxford and to enter his name at the Inns of Court, with a view to practise Civil Law: he was to beware of early wedlock, and never to lend money without good security. Nothing particular was said about resuming the paternal seat at Sarum, but the agent of the family there had instructions to prevent the admission of any claim on the part of doubtful voters: for already the Governor had thoughts of returning to England. In the prime of life, and possessing a fair competency, society in Mayfair had more attractions for Robert Pitt than that of Oxford; helping to make laws at Westminster seemed an easier occupation than the study of them at Lincoln's Inn, and a handsome wife with rank and fortune, the best of friends with whom to spend his days. Harriet Villiers, daughter of the fourth Lord Grandison, was deemed by everyone except his father an eligible match; but disobedience was a sin not to be forgiven by the despot of Fort St. George. To an old friend in England he gave vent to his ill-humour. "My son has not followed any one direction or order of mine. His sudden captivation must certainly have rendered him a light and inconsiderate fellow in the eyes of all men of business and thought. The lady I am a stranger to, and I believe shall always be so. I wish she may not have the worst of it; though with her fortune, and what he has of his own, with the advantages I have given him in his education, are very good working tools, and all that he must ever expect from me."[1] Further mortified by the different feeling shown by the rest of the family on the occasion, he wrote to Sir Stephen Evance: "I can say little to my son's marriage since 'tis done. What money he carried with him hence, including my note, with his wife's fortune, will be near ten thousand pounds: a good beginning for a young man who has been brought up to business.

[1] To Captain Edward Harrison, 23rd April, 1704.

I have no money to spare, nor shall any of mine be fooled away by my wife or children while I am living, nor afterwards neither, if I can provide against it. As to what you write of my wife, if she can't live upon the income of my land let her starve, and all her children with her; therefore, pay not one penny that she draws upon you. I hereby enclose a Bill of Exchange upon my son Robert Pitt for three hundred dollars, being so much paid to discharge his bill from the Cape, which he is to make good to my cash, as also the thousand pounds his mother gave him, she not having power to dispose of a penny of mine, nor never shall."

A model of the great stone was sent, in 1703, to Sir S. Evance, and it was consigned next year jointly to him and R. Pitt, not to be parted with on any account for less than its value. "What would contribute most thereto would be the concealing of it." Having staked so much in its purchase he reiterated his directions that they should not try to dispose of it till after the war was over, nor in any case for less than £1,500 a carat, though it ought to be more. "There was not the fellow of it in the world, and it was his whole dependence." When first polished he was advised that the portions cut off were worth £1,500, a mistake he supposed for as many thousands. Again and again he enjoined the utmost secrecy and care in the keeping of that "great concern of his, the good success of which was to crown all his labours." Meanwhile there had been anxious enquiries at Madras, by orders from the Company, as to what had become of the big diamond; it therefore as much concerned him to have it secreted in England as there. To his jeweller in London he wrote promising to requite him for his inestimable favours in this grand affair. "If the English were so lucky as to put Charles on the throne of Spain, nothing he could purchase to make his acknowledgments to Queen Anne (would be) so acceptable."[1] Rumours affecting his bankers' credit being whispered from afar, he begged of Mr. Dolben to have the matchless gem deposited in an iron chest at the Bank, of which he, Sir S. Evance, and his son should each have a different key; and if on the union with Scotland it was intended to present the Queen with the title of Empress, he was sure nothing was so proper to accompany it, being the biggest and best in the world.[2]

[1] To A. de Ffonseca, 13th September, 1706.

[2] To I. Dolben, February 5:h, September 11th, 1707.

Yet for two years longer he suffered the width of a world to lie between him and his treasure.

From the far East his hope and pride still turned to Old Sarum, which he wished his son, who was soon forgiven for making a good match without leave, to represent in Parliament while he was himself away. It would be very hard (he wrote to his agent there) if he should meet with any opposition at the next election, when so much of the interest was in his own hands; and he hoped Mr. Mompesson, the other Member, would understand it so and join with him. Charles Mompesson and Robert Pitt consequently agreed, and returned each other.

The new M.P. sided apparently with Opposition, and though the War Office allowed him to purchase a cavalry commission for his younger brother at £1,200, he professed to be so disgusted with the management of affairs that he retired into the country, and refused to attend for some time. His father was mortified at not having been consulted, and wrote to a friend of the family that he never intended that his younger children should depend on their elder brother, and he hoped the Lord would have mercy on those who did.[1] He was much dissatisfied with his family, but told Colonel Windham he would give £6,000 to each of his daughters if they married with his approval. On the eve of his return home in 1709, he was charged with having purchased a rare diamond, and with having sold it at a great price for his own profit instead of that of the Company; but his accuser having broken down in many of his statements was sent home in custody, and Governor Pitt himself afterwards quitted Madras.

Resuming his avocations in the City, the ex-Governor continued to import goods from India on an extensive scale. If anyone understood the mysteries of the Eastern markets it was he; and his accumulated gains enabled him to speculate wisely and well. His differences with the great chartered bankers of Leadenhall Street were over; and he long kept up friendly relations with them. There was no attempt on their part to question his loyalty while in their service, or his right to enjoy the wealth he had acquired therein. No purchaser had been found for the wondrous jewel he used to speak of as his chief dependence; and as he was content for several years with its

[1] To R. Raworth, 13th September, 1707.

safe custody in a dark room, while he lived luxuriously and bought landed property, people felt warranted in styling him the rich Mr. Pitt. He once more became M.P. for Old Sarum, while his eldest son was returned for Salisbury. At the next election his Parliamentary influence expanded. Son Robin was saved the trouble of standing for the cathedral city and was nominated with his parent for the Roman ruin; while his brother Thomas was made a burgess of Wilton, in time to become Member for that expensive village. Nor did the aspirations of the family end there. The Pitts joined the Whig Opposition and voted with them against the expulsion of Steele; and on the proposed commercial treaty with France declared against it in spirit and detail, the ex-Governor moving as an amendment that the Tory Ministry of the Queen should be lent to his Majesty, Louis XIV., for three years, as they seemed best qualified to carry into effect his designs.[1] Exaggeration of this sort was of course cheered, laughed at, and speedily forgotten, but one may imagine how similar opinions, subsequently uttered without restraint by the fireside, must have caught the ear and fired the imagination of a susceptible boy like William Pitt, taught to look upon his grandsire as one of the ablest and most remarkable men of his time. Who will say when the seeds of predilection and preference, sown casually, strike root in the opening mind; or by what stimulating elements they are gradually reared to maturity? At the dissolution on the accession of George I., while Governor Pitt and his two eldest sons retained their seats, a fourth at the neighbouring hamlet of Hindon was procured for John, the youngest of the family, and a fifth at Bridgwater for a youthful cousin; while George Pitt, of Strathfieldsaye, was elected for Southampton, and George Pitt, of Shroton, in Dorsetshire, for Wareham. The two latter were indeed independent of the ex-Governor, but a name is fortunate that counts in the seventh power at Westminster. Good society opened its eyes, and Thomas the younger winning the hand of Lady Frances, sole heiress of Ridgway Lord Londonderry, the Earldom was revived in his person. In 1716, the old adventurer consented to undertake the Governorship of Jamaica, whose disordered state it was supposed his administrative experience would peculiarly fit him to retrieve. He was probably flattered

[1] P. Wentworth to Lord Strafford, at the Hague, 23rd April, 1714.

at being thus chosen, and set himself to master the details of the problem he would have to solve. His appointment was duly gazetted, and he undertook to return Sir W. Strickland in his stead on his recently taking office. But for some cause, unexplained, he renounced the colonial trust. Not choosing to subside out of English public life, he managed to re-enter Parliament for the borough of Thirsk. Soon after, negotiations began for the purchase of the great diamond for the young king of France. The Regent Orleans feared popular blame if in a time of dearth and scant revenue he lavished an unprecedented sum on his nephew's diadem. St. Simon took credit for having persuaded him not to lose the opportunity of signalising his administration by securing for Louis XV. the most brilliant jewel in Christendom, and told him the nation would applaud his prodigality. He agreed to the price accordingly of two million livres; crown jewels of equivalent value to be given in pledge till the Treasury could afford to redeem them, and £40,000 as a first instalment to be paid down. France, notwithstanding her penury, exulted in the acquisition. The boy king wore the gem at his coronation, and through all the vicissitudes that have since befallen, it remains a symbol of national pride in the pre-eminence of all that belongs to France.

Before the year was out old Tom Pitt had invested the first instalment, and some thousands beside, in the purchase of Boconnoc, a goodly mansion and estate of 1,700 acres in Cornwall, which he gave during his life, and left by will to his eldest son. There the Eton holidays of his grandson William were usually passed, and there his parents dwelt with their other children when Court and Parliament were not in town. Robert Pitt was elected in 1722 for Oakhampton, leaving room at Old Sarum for his kinsman George, who in due time took an office under the Crown, and was succeeded by another relative. Electoral casualties elsewhere somewhat reduced their legislative strength, and but five of the names thenceforth appeared at St. Stephen's.

Early fondness for classic and historic reading seemed to have led to that devotion to political life which became in manhood William Pitt's absorbing passion. Inheriting but a slender private income, his family had obtained for him a cornetcy of Horse, but his entrance soon after into Parliament confirmed his preference for other pursuits than those which in times of peace had

not even the attraction of adventure. He took his seat in Opposition near Richard Grenville and young Lyttelton, whom his brother had named as his colleague for Oakhampton. Both were related by marriage to Lord Cobham, and thence arose the bantering epithet, long familiar in the Lobby, of the Cobham Cousins. The voice of Thomas Pitt was never heard in debate, nor was that of his ambitious kinsman, until upon the marriage of the Prince of Wales Pulteney suggested that an Address of thanks and congratulation should be moved and seconded by two of the youngest friends of his Royal Highness; opportunity thus being afforded for the expression of regret that an event so much desired by the nation had been so long deferred. The Prince was still a resident at St. James's, though his years rendered it reasonable that he should have a suitable establishment of his own. It was no secret that he was fast getting into debt, and that partly in consequence he had become the object of matrimonial designs which neither King nor Ministers could endure with complacency. One of these was ascribed to the old Duchess of Marlborough, who hoped he might be induced to marry her favourite grand-daughter, Lady Diana Spencer, having for her dowry £100,000. It was even said that the nuptials had been privately arranged, when the vigilance of Walpole enabled him betimes to disconcert the scheme. The Heir Apparent, it was said, had conceived a preference for his cousin, the Crown Princess of Prussia, and that the attachment was reciprocal; but the inveterate aversion of George II. for his brother-in-law of Brandenberg rendered secrecy indispensable; and it was only through a misplaced confidence by the Prussian Queen, who favoured the attachment, that its existence became known to the English Ministry, and was thereby defeated. It was thought prudent to guard the Prince against other attractions, and the diplomatic choice of a consort fell on the Princess Agusta of Saxe Coburg Gotha. The Address of congratulation, moved by Lyttelton in a maiden speech, was seconded by Pitt, who spoke also for the first time.[1] Both indulged in compliments to the King, for having thus, in his wisdom and goodness, provided the best guarantee for the happiness of his son and the continuance of the Protestant succession to the Throne. As reported, the speech of the latter justifies in no degree auguries of future oratorical fame. Remembered indistinctly, after lapse of

[1] 29th April, 1736.

years, merits were claimed for it as Ciceronian; and it is possible that happy turns of expression gave signs of the mastery of language that later on was to win such wide renown. In covert satire they were unlike the florid and inflated eulogies of Royalty with which they were mingled, for, by all accounts, they cost the youthful orator rather dear. George II. is said to have resented keenly the insinuation that he had very little merit in bringing about the match; and Walpole was, of course, treated unceremoniously for having neglected too long the duty he owed to the nation. When the festivities were over, and his Majesty had once more made his escape from captivity of kingship, and the Queen had resumed the functions of Regency, the young Cornet Pitt was deprived of his commission in the Blues, for no other reason that could be assigned than for his having given his opinion prematurely on delicate affairs of State. It has been truly said, by one who was himself no inexperienced judge of the arts of cynicism, that "his speech, though it seems vapid enough as reported, must have been forcible and stinging, for it was the foundation of that long and irreconcilable personal animosity of George II. against Mr. Pitt."[1]

In conformity with his recent declaration, Walpole asserted the right and duty of Ministers to deprive officers of their commissions who voted against them. "A Minister," he said, "must be a very pitiful fellow if he did not turn out those who pretended to meddle with the Civil Government: and he would leave that advice as a legacy to those who might succeed him"; on which his inveterate enemy, old Duchess Sarah, characteristically observed, "If I had been a Parliament man I should have been so saucy as to have asked why the soldiers were in Parliament, for, according to his notion, they were only to be a standing army to plunder and ruin as occasion offered, and to vote away our property when they sat in the House."[2]

George II. soon got tired of Harrington, and wanted him removed to make way for Horace Walpole. But the discreet Cofferer well knew that he and his brother would not be endured in the same Cabinet by those who already cast envious looks upon the numerous places held by the family; and he told the Queen that he dare not accept the post. But his Majesty,

[1] J. W. Croker's note to Hervey's "Memoirs," II., 118.

[2] Private Correspondence.

when leaving for Hanover, insisted on his accompanying him in the exceptional capacity of Vice-Secretary of State. As Elector of Hanover he loved to take part in all German affairs, without amenability to Cabinet control which fettered his will in England; and as there was always a danger of his committing himself further than his English Council and Parliament would sanction, it was considered rather hazardous to suffer him to spend the summer abroad without a keeper of his diplomatic conscience.

A twofold correspondence was confidentially kept up between the brothers during the autumn, one set of letters being always shown to him in which foreign affairs were discussed as though he had really a potential voice in them, and another set as scrupulously kept from his sight wherein the First Lord of the Treasury dictated what course in each case the King was to be persuaded to take. The Vice-Secretary detailed from time to time the difficulties of his task, and how he accomplished it. In this way Sir Robert and the Queen were kept informed of all they were most curious to know, and much that Harrington would have probably shrunk from reporting.

George II. promised Madame Walmoden to return in the following May. He kept the engagement to himself, however, as did Harrington, who had set his heart on an earldom and the Rangership in reversion of Richmond Park, neither of which Walpole was ready to concede.

Through Weston, Under-Secretary for the Northern Department, Lord Hervey learnt the fact of the Royal promise to the new favourite, and communicated it to Walpole, who was more concerned than he cared to show. "He shan't go for all that," he exclaimed. "His Majesty imagines frequently he shall do many things, which, because he is not at first contradicted, he fancies he shall be let to do at last. He thinks he is devilish stout, and never gives up his will or his opinion; but he never acts in anything material according to either of them, but when I have a mind he should. Generally it is the policy of Ministers to throw the blame of everything wrong done on their master; but I am willing to own whenever our master does wrong it is the fault of his Ministers, who must either want resolution enough to oppose him or sense enough to do it with success. Our master, like most people's masters, wishes himself absolute,

and fancies he has courage enough to attempt making himself so; but, if I know anything of him, he is, with all his personal bravery, as great a political coward as ever wore a crown, and as much afraid to lose it."[1]

George II. quitted Hanover reluctantly. There, he said, everyone looked up to him as the fountain of honour, and the source of wealth and power, instead of being, as he was in England, little more than the nominal Head of the State. His return was at length announced. The Queen evinced less satisfaction than she had done on the last occasion, when she regarded his coming with some degree of triumph as promising the renovation of her former influence and the breaking of a spell in which he seemed to have been bound. Nothing she had recently learnt of Court life at Hanover led her to hope for the resumption of relations she had so long valued. Nor were the Cabinet more elated. The continuance of bad weather for several days caused great anxiety even at the Admiralty till a letter from the King arrived to say that, much against his will, he was still detained at Helvoetsluys. On inquiry it was found that "Walpole was gone with Miss Skerritt to Richmond Park; which, considering the anxiety at the continuance of the storm, her Majesty looked upon as a piece of gallantry that might have been spared."

During the ensuing week, with Devonshire, Newcastle, Richmond, and Grafton, Sir Robert strove to keep a cheerful countenance and hide the misgivings that still haunted them; but on the 26th things looked so dark that he felt bound to tell Queen Caroline all he feared, and to prepare her for the worst. A few hours later a letter from the weather-bound Monarch was brought by a venturous fisherman to bid his desponding people to be of good comfort, for that he was enduring patiently the duress put upon him by the elements, and that until the storm ceased he would not risk the lives of his faithful officers and their crews. The Queen made known the purport of the letter to those around her; and told them how glad she was to be assured that the damage to the ships and risk of life incurred in a futile attempt to sail before the storm went down was not caused by any petulant temper of his Majesty, "who had submitted himself entirely to Sir Charles Wager's government, and had debarked in consequence of his directions." But this ac-

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs."

count, according to the Vice-Chamberlain, few believed. Nobody in the room had not heard, and few had not seen, accounts from all who were about his Majesty at Helvoetsluys that his impatience was insupportable, Sir C. Wager's and Horace Walpole's letters being full of nothing else. The King had declared if the Admiral would not sail, he would go in a packet-boat. Sir Charles told him that he could not. "Let it be what weather it might," he said, he was not afraid, and the Admiral had replied "If, sir, you are not, I am"; but his Majesty swore he had rather be twelve hours in a storm than twenty-four more at Helvoetsluys; on which Sir Charles said he need not wish for twelve, for four would do the business; and at last exclaimed, "Well, sir, you can oblige me to go, but I can make you come back again." To the Queen he owned that he had told the Admiral that he wished to see a storm at sea, and that when obliged to put back Sir Charles asked him if his curiosity was satisfied, which drew forth the reply: "So thoroughly that I do not desire ever to see another." In the letter reporting this dialogue the laconic First Lord said that thenceforth "his Majesty was as tame as any about him." To the Queen's congratulations on his escape he responded at great length in terms full of the affection and admiration of a young lover. The Queen observed to Walpole, "Do not think because I show you this that I am an old fool, vain of my person and charms this time of day. I am personally pleased with it, but I am not unreasonably proud of it." The Ministers who saw the epistle agreed that in the gift of writing love-letters no one ever surpassed their incomprehensible master.

The Prince of Wales, whatever may have been his inciting motives, behaved well throughout the period of uncertainty respecting the Royal Squadron, and justly gained no little popularity thereby. His attendance on his mother was daily and deferential, and his readiness to take pains to conciliate the good opinion of all classes, though spitefully criticised by those who feared his accession to the throne, could not be denied even by them. Before any rumour had spread of the danger to the Royal Squadron at Helvoetsluys he had invited the leading men of the City to dine; and even Hervey felt bound to own that it would have been wrong to put them off when there was no certain news of his father being in danger. He could not

have been unaware of the unpopularity of the King, chiefly caused by his frequent and prolonged absence abroad; and the belief of his preference for his German courtiers. He too was a German, but he had mastered the difficulties of the English language, and spoke it with a fluency his father or grandfather had been unable to attain. His defects and vices were but too well-known to those about him to allow of any reliance in his professions of superiority to party and patriotic love of country; and even his mother, when pleading for his support by those whom she knew distrusted and disliked him, could not conceal her fears that his instability of purpose would render him incessantly the dupe of the worthless and deceiving. He had already exceeded his income of £50,000 from his father, and £10,000 from the Duchy of Cornwall, and having married—not his cousin of Prussia, whom he loved, but a daughter of Saxe-Gotha, who had been chosen for him—he not unreasonably thought himself entitled to a separate establishment, and as much to support it as his father had enjoyed when Prince of Wales. This, however, was refused, as lessening still further the means of parental control, and he resolved to apply to Parliament for what he deemed his due.

Carteret, Pulteney, and Chesterfield, Lyttelton, and Pitt continued to be the advisers of the Heir Apparent, who was supposed by them to regard himself as the most ill-used of sons.

The Chancellor and Newcastle on many points differed from the First Lord, and on this, amongst the rest, they would fain have striven to prevent the widening of the breach in the Royal Family. But their advice was rarely asked, and still more rarely taken. Walpole was supreme in the Closet and in Parliament, as well as in the Council Chamber; and his disapproving colleagues saw that unless they could reinforce their influence in the Cabinet they must still act in subordination to their dominant, and at times domineering, chief. Though he would not try to reconcile father and son, he insisted on his Majesty's offering to grant the Prince, upon his making becoming submission, the extra £50,000 a-year, during good behaviour, out of the privy purse, and settling a jointure on the Princess. George II. angrily resisted, but the Minister was inflexible and Royalty at last gave way.

The advisers of the Prince bade him reject this offer, which

would have taken him out of their hands and made him dependent for half his income on the pleasure of his father. They undertook to obtain all he wished by a vote in Parliament without any humbling conditions. He told the Lords of the Cabinet, therefore, who brought the message, that he was sorry that the matter was now entirely out of his hands. His Majesty's rage was unbounded, and bitter were the reproaches heaped upon Walpole. But the fruit, he said, of his suggestion was to be reaped not to-day but to-morrow; by it he counted on bringing the House of Commons to reason, not the Prince. And so the event proved.

Both Sir Joseph Jekyll and Bishop Sherlock told the Queen that it were better to concede the claims of the Prince than to risk the issue of an angry debate. Lady Hervey, who, notwithstanding her husband's position at Court, kept up her friendship with Pulteney, upbraided him with taking the lead in the threatening movement there. Sweet Molly Lepell had never disguised her admiration for him above all his rivals for fame; or her belief that he was the fittest man to be Minister whenever Walpole should succumb; and, exercising the right, as few others ventured to do, of saying what she thought with fascinating frankness, she rated the orator keenly but kindly on making himself the mouthpiece of a proposal which she knew from the first he had disapproved. All that Pulteney, in excuse, could say was, that failing to prevent the motion being made he thought it safer in his hands than any other's, and that he could not afford to take a subordinate part if discussion there must be. The part he actually took impressed even those who loved him not, as specious and splendid; rich in historic precedent and recent example, and sparkling throughout with imagery and wit. His great antagonist was likewise equal to the occasion. Relying mainly on the Civil List having been granted to the King for life, without any stipulation of income to be allowed the Prince of Wales, the interference of Parliament would amount to a direct resumption of a portion of what was given; and, as such, would be a change in the balance of the Constitution, the consequence of which no one could foresee. The effect of this artful appeal to feelings and sentiments, stronger than even those of party, was seen at the close of the debate. Had the division been called when Pulteney sat down

a mingling majority of various sections would have carried his motion; but after the Minister's speech five-and-forty Tories, led by Wyndham, withdrew, and the Tellers at midnight reckoned but 204 votes in its favour, while 234 were counted against it. In the Upper House Carteret moved a similar Address, which was also rejected.

The Chancellor and the Secretary of State thought it would be a high stroke of policy to detach Carteret from the Opposition and bring him into office once more. The ambitious Statesman had no prejudices or opinions which stood in the way, and readily embraced the proposal. He had, indeed, for some time been out of favour with the Court; but, through Lady Sundon and others, he took pains to repudiate many of the wayward acts of the Prince of Wales; and occasionally he perplexed some of his more eager associates by his secession or silence in the House of Lords when they counted on his aid. In short, he did all which could well be done by him to allay personal animosities, and to qualify himself for joining the Administration. But when at length Newcastle opened the matter to Walpole, who had silently noted all these preliminary manœuvres, he repelled the suggestion with passionate disdain. "I am glad, my lord," he said, "of the opportunity, once for all, to let you know my determined sentiments on this matter, and without further expostulation on what you would have me do which I will not do, or what I would hinder you doing and cannot. Your Grace must take your choice between me and him; and if you are angry at my saying this I care not; I have said it to your betters, and I'll stick to it."[1] He had, in fact, more than once taken pains to convince Royalty of what he termed the duplicity of Carteret, and to make them understand that he could not and would not endure him as a colleague.

Flushed with the confirmation, as he deemed it, of his unfatherly resolve, George II. wished to signalise his triumph by revoking the concessions he had offered, and by serving the Heir Apparent with notice to quit St. James's. But the prudent head of the Government would sanction neither act of folly, which could only tend to make many repent the votes they had just given. A Motion of Censure would be infallibly carried, and in self-vindication the Minister must ask next day for a

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 335.

Vote of Confidence, which he was sure to win. Thus exonerated from blame, he must retire, "for how could any Minister serve a Sovereign and say he could carry his own points and not his master's?" The eviction was thus averted for the time, but it was only suspended. He urged the ratification of the promise to settle the £50,000 a-year, and the jointure; but he was met with a refusal on the ground that these were terms of accommodation which, not having been accepted, were no longer binding; they were articles of a treaty to prevent the discussion in Parliament, and as the Prince had allowed the question to be debated it must be looked upon as a release from the obligation of performing the conditions, and things must be left where they were. Sir Robert, losing patience, answered brusquely that the message conveyed through Hardwicke contained no such condition, and that Parliament and the rest of the world would look upon it as a temporary device, if the promises were not performed. George II. rejoined, "I see my affairs, then, are upon that foot that I must yield in everything." Nor was his sense of practical subordination to the will of those who ceremoniously called themselves his Majesty's Ministers, lightened by the preponderance apparently in his favour in the House of Lords, or by the moderation of Carteret's tone in appealing to that assembly. Newcastle, who attempted to reply to him, had as usual striven to conciliate both sides. He had in fact privately told the Queen that nothing would settle the question but a substantial addition to the income of the Prince, and it was left to Scarborough and the Chancellor to defend the resistance of the Court. Walpole discerned clearly his motives, and resented what he felt to be the Duke's preparation to desert him for Carteret, with whom he was known to live on intimate terms. When asked why his Grace had not made a less temporising speech, he said, "I cannot mend the Duke of Newcastle's understanding; and if he will not believe what I have told him, that that nail will not drive, I cannot help it. I know him well and see very plainly his manner of working; he is linking himself with the Chancellor, and thinks to stand by that help on his own legs without me." Hervey confirmed his distrust; for beside the Duke cultivating the Chancellor, his courting the Bishop of Salisbury showed plainly he proposed to keep an interest at Court by means of the greatest enemy Sir Robert had there;

and as he thought Lord Carteret's a better life than Sir Robert's, he determined not to be desperate with the reversionary Minister any more than with the reigning one, for the obligations he had to the one could not prevent his turning his eyes towards the other.

To the Queen the Ministerial Dictator explained his position and his purpose with subtle flattery, but without reserve. He was sensible that somewhat of her confidence in him had been withdrawn of late, and he thought it hard if after so many years' success in carrying out her wishes in Administration he should be supplanted in her favour by those who had frequently opposed them. "I know Lord Carteret has offered to sell your son to you, and I know the hands through which he has tried to make the bargain." The Queen owned to him that the Earl had endeavoured to excuse taking the Prince's part by sending her word that he was driven to it. "He said that he found you were too well established in my favour for him to hope to supplant you; and upon finding he could not be first, that he had mortified his pride so far as to take the resolution of submitting to be second; but if you would not permit him even to serve under you, who could blame him if he continued to fight against you?" Sir Robert said it was impossible business could go on long with him and Carteret. He knew him thoroughly; and knowing this was an impracticable scheme, and that a reconciliation of this kind would be nothing more than a short introduction to a new rupture, he must beg leave to tell her Majesty, impertinent as it might sound, that she must take her choice between them; that he could never serve with Lord Carteret; but he was very ready, if she thought it for her interest and her service, to quit. He knew that Bishop Sherlock and Lord Carteret had offered her Majesty to bring in the Tories and fight this battle for her against her son; but he wished her to consider, before embarking, how the matter would stand. They could not answer for the party; and if they could, in what manner was it to be done? Were they to turn out all those who voted in the majority of thirty to take in those who voted the other way, in order to carry it by a greater majority? How were they to save appearances but by advising the gift of another £20,000 a-year to her son; and would that quiet him? No; he would be just as ready to fight for the rest, and more able. If he forced a change of Ad-

ministration he would have conquered. She knew he said so himself when Mr. Hedges tried to divert him from pursuing the affair in Parliament, telling him it was impossible he could ever get the money. His answer was, "At least I shall show I can do more by opposing than the Opposition have been able to do in sixteen years without me; I shall turn out Walpole." Let her Majesty consider too what she would do by taking a Tory Administration, and bringing people into her service who never could be in her interest; the Whig party, the natural support of her family, would unite in the interest of her son; and rising in audacity as he pressed the argument, Walpole added — "do not flatter yourself, Madam, that a party that is strong enough to support you though divided, will not be strong enough to distress you if you unite them against you." Had Caroline believed that it was really in her power or that of the King to change at will the Administration, the naked insolence of such a threat would have roused her pride, for the time at least, to resentment, but she knew too well the weakness of her husband and the strength of the Minister to misinterpret his egregious flattery as anything more than clever compliment, and her manner at parting with him showed that he had prevailed, for she dismissed him with the strongest assurances of satisfaction with his conduct, and promises of her support.

Under the advice of Pulteney, Sir John Barnard brought in a Bill to reduce the interest of the Public Debt from four to three per cent., by which a saving of £500,000 a-year would have been effected. The fundholders alone would, it was imagined, oppose the scheme, and Opposition looked to reap much credit from its adoption, which by implication cast on the Minister of Finance the just reproach of having omitted to suggest the saving. Walpole's friends thought that he could only acquiesce in it silently, or affect to lend it his support. Strange to say, he would do neither, and on the motion for leave to bring in the Bill he voted in a minority of 157 against 220, many of his colleagues being in the majority. His motive was satisfactorily explained. By some it was ascribed to jealousy, which could not endure the taking of the conduct of finance out of his hands; by others it was attributed to fear of a defection of the monied interest. It is only certain that he spared no pains, and it is probable stuck at no expedient to defeat the measure. Whilst the Bill was

preparing he went about persuading, intimidating, arguing, and by his "Exchequer knowledge" puzzling, with regard to details, many who had approved of the proposal. He failed to convince his own brother or Mr. Pelham, but nevertheless he had worked so effectually that on the second reading it was rejected by almost a greater majority than that by which it had been brought in. Walpole, however, applied himself to the task, and borrowed considerable sums from the old Duchess of Marlborough and other persons of wealth, to convert certain loans from six to four per cent. Their amount was comparatively small, having been raised for special occasion; but with the limited revenue of the Kingdom at the time the saving in this way was perhaps as large as could have been prudently attempted.

Meanwhile Carteret, seeing that the doors of the Cabinet would not be opened to him from within, resolved to try whether from without they might not be broken. Supported by the cheers rather than by the votes of the Opposition, whose confidence for a time was shaken, he moved for an inquiry into the circumstances of recent tumults in Edinburgh, and the causes which had led to them. The exceptional violence of the mob, the tragic ending of the outbreak, and the weakness of the local executive throughout have been described too often to require recital here. The Queen had, as Regent, exercised discretional lenity to the authorities accused of undue rigour.

Carteret gave notice in the Lords of a motion to take the Speech from the Throne into consideration, and the Cabinet met at Lord Harrington's the night before to consult how best it should be met; but having no light as to its immediate purpose they separated without coming to any determination. It was the last time Chancellor Talbot went abroad; he was then very unwell, and he died of pleurisy a few days after, much to the regret of all who had the opportunity of estimating his integrity and learning as a judge, and his candour and good sense in council. The Cabinet were ill-agreed on Scotch affairs. Newcastle was all for vengeance and the suppression of what remained of local administrative independence north of the Tweed; Argyll, on the contrary, contended hotly, if not consistently, that the authorities had done all they could to curb the irrepressible force of national opinion.

To appease the wrath of the Court at the murder of Captain Porteous, Walpole's majority in the Cabinet agreed that a Bill of pains and penalties should be brought in by which the Capital of Scotland was to be deprived of its charter, its gates to be razed, and the city guard taken away. A majority at first seemed ready in each House to adopt that measure, but the Scottish peers and Members made such a stand against it that in spite of all that Walpole and Hardwicke could say in palliation of its undiscriminating provisions, they were commuted for a heavy fine upon the whole body of citizens, the greater part of whom were blameless in the affair. Argyll took a conspicuous part in the discussion. Referring pointedly to an expression ascribed to the Queen Regent, "that Scotland must be reduced to a hunting ground," MacCullamore said with a low bow, "Then, Madame, I must retire to my part of the country to get ready my hounds."

On the death of Talbot, no doubt prevailed among either lawyers or politicians to whom the Great Seal ought to be given; but some days' delay was unavoidable, and meanwhile a Commission, sealed by his Majesty himself, appointed Lord Hardwicke Speaker of the Upper House.

Although ambitious of the higher dignity, he hesitated about giving up the permanent emoluments of the King's Bench; and haggled for pensions and reversions before finally accepting the coveted promotion. Walpole was not to be deceived, and firmly resisted what he felt were exorbitant demands; tired of the discussion, he took out his watch and said drily, "I suppose I must offer the Seal to Fazakerly,"—an eminent practitioner in Chancery. "What!" exclaimed Hardwicke, "to a Tory, if not a Jacobite?" "It is all very true," said the Minister, "but if by one o'clock you do not accept, by two Fazakerly becomes Lord Keeper and one of the best Whigs in England." My Lord's hesitation thereupon vanished; and he was content with a promise of the next Tellership for his son. On the 21st of February he received the Great Seal from the King, with the title of Chancellor; and for the next five-and-twenty years enjoyed uninterruptedly the privileges of a seat in the Cabinet.

Sir George Oxenden, noted chiefly for his debauched life, was turned out of the Treasury for voting against Government on the Prince of Wales's claim for an increased annuity. He had

seduced the wife of the First Lord's eldest son, a woman of weak intellect, whom Lord Walpole had married for sake of her great fortune, and who was the cause of much misery and mortification to all whose name she bore. It might have been thought difficult to find a successor to Sir George in every way worthy of him, but Sir Robert had a keen appreciation of character. Giles Earle, M.P. for Marlborough, was originally a political adherent of the Duke of Argyll. By his dependability, and, perhaps, by his congenial coarseness of humour, he had so gained the after-dinner favour of Walpole, that in spite of many remonstrances and even reproaches for what was thought a reckless abuse of patronage, he was added to the Board of Treasury. Many grumbled at his appointment, particularly those who coveted it for themselves or their friends. Hervey was one of these, and lost all patience when Earle was given that which he thought his friend Stephen Fox should have had.

At the end of the Session his Lordship renewed his complaints that his friends and connections were still overlooked in the dispensation of patronage, and at last his importunities seem to have prevailed, as he notes with satisfaction that the younger Mr. Fox got the surveyorship of works, worth £1,100 a year, the elder a positive promise of a peerage, which was redeemed in 1741; and the Hon. Thomas Hervey "a sum of money in present, and a promise to provide for him the first vacancy."[1] The last named was the well-known Tom Hervey, the oddity and license of whose conduct was gilt and varnished by a grace and wit peculiarly his own. Lord Westmoreland was deprived of his troop of Guards for voting for the Prince, the Duke of Montagu being named in his stead. It so happened that this very troop had been bought by Lord Westmoreland from the Earl of Pembroke, to whom the Duke had sold it a few years before; and "Old Sarah," whom nothing escaped, remarked in her own bitter way that Government had robbed Lord Westmoreland who had never had anything in the army except what he bought, to enrich his grace of Montagu, who had never had anything but what he had sold.

The Prince, having no longer anything to expect from Ministers, threw himself completely into the arms of the Op-

[1] Hervey's "Memoirs," II., 345.

position, and voted with the minority in the Peers, which at Court was denounced as the climax of all his misdeeds.

One of the private purposes to which the Church Establishment was put systematically was the making provision for used-up tutors of noble houses. It was only most matter of course that when his unlearned pupil proceeded to Oxford or went into the Guards, the chaplain, if he had behaved well, should be pensioned off by Government in some prebend or country parish. The competition between noble friends of the Ministry for these favours was sometimes greater than the means available, and the Ducal Secretary of State had, in addition, to appease numerous claims in his wide electorate of clergy who had done their best to promote his interest at the poll. His willingness to gratify them all is unaffectedly professed in his replies, which acknowledge frankly the value of the consideration given. On one occasion he regrets his inability to provide for the tutor of a noble friend because he is already engaged to do the like when he can to the Duke of R. and the Earl of H.; and, unfortunately, he can oblige neither just then having to do for his own nephew's preceptor, which he is sure Lord A. will admit ought to come first. And about the same time he is compelled to put off the claim of a reverend supporter in Sussex because two other parsons are before him on his list, and he is not sure whether Dr. Gooch will, by taking a bishopric, make room for any of them. It is only just, however, to note that neither side profaned their correspondence with the least allusion either to faith or works.[1]

A proposal, which twelve years before seems to have been first entertained, was now seriously considered, for separating Hanover from Great Britain, and settling the succession to the Electorate on William Duke of Cumberland, the King's eldest son. Strange to say, both parties to the family quarrel embraced the project, and this seems to have been the sole cause of its frustration, for had it once been promulgated, so general and so intense was the feeling that English interests were sacrificed to those of the Electorate that all parties would have been only too glad to adopt the suggestion. It was not, of course, to be thought of. Frederick's advisers suggested that it would be a capital bargain for him and them if his Royal Highness should offer to sell his reversion to Hanover for the much longed-for addition to his income.

[1] Newcastle to Mr. Barttelot and Lord Lymington, 7th April, 19th May, 1737.

His mother, he knew, would be tempted by the only chance of making a splendid provision for her favourite son; his father, he hoped, might be reconciled by the prospect of his being himself stripped of the favourite flower of his inheritance; the Government, it was calculated, would not object to have an excuse for resisting in future diplomatic entanglements, and the nation at large would shout for joy at the prospect of having done for ever with an appendancy they loathed. Finally, Opposition would reap all the credit of the measure, and the Court of the Prince would be twice as well worth belonging to.

Walpole's sagacity foresaw many objections to the practical working of the scheme, and would not urge it on the Queen. That singular woman, who had secretly had two drafts of the scheme prepared some time before, both of which she had destroyed, and then had a third drawn up which she kept by her, expressed the utmost surprise on being told that the public initiation of the thing was likely to come from her son. There were few proofs of folly she did not believe him capable of giving, but this was too extravagant to find credit with her. In a word, she was not prepared for this kissing of the rod she had secretly laid by for her disobedient first-born. It was, in her eyes, the greatest penalty he could have provoked, and that he should have invited its infliction disappointed and pained her. But why, after all, it never was proposed in Parliament remains one of the many things which history does not tell.

Cabinet discussions on the difficulties with Spain, leading to stifled but not extinguished differences, arose in June, 1737. The Chancellor, notwithstanding his instinctive caution, had been somewhat abrupt, by his own confession, in trying to cut matters short at a meeting late on the night of the 16th, after which he spent two hours with Sir Robert, who "declared his intention to have two or three more Cabinets before he went into Norfolk, in order to consider what possible measures might be undertaken in case an unsatisfactory answer should come to their last proposition; and he did not talk in the most sanguine manner about its success. He expressed strong apprehensions lest Newcastle should write to Mr. Keene *invitâ Minervâ*, and that should spoil it. Hardwicke hoped that his Grace would give no handle for suggestions of that kind on this occasion. The whole Cabinet had gone so far in it that he need have no tenderness or nicety to state the

affair fully, and that in a probable light, and to give all the instructions that were suggested or could be necessary." A postscript ran: "Do not fail to burn this letter."[1] The screws were already loosened in the Cabinet, and it is evident that the great Over Lord had begun to lose his hold over the chief proprietor of votes in Parliament, and Walpole thought it worth while using the Chancellor's influence over the Duke to forbear what temper or tact would not suffer him directly to ask him not to do.

Tired of the despotic ascendancy of the First Lord, more than one close observer began to ask by what authority any man could claim to be absolute, and whether Administration might not do as as well, or better, without him. The pitiless critic of Marlborough House discerned that with all the varied talents of Opposition, there was no one amongst them manifestly entitled to be chief and that by reason of acknowledged jealousy among leaders professing to be animated only by their patriotism, the cause might never win or be lost on the morrow of victory. "I am nothing," she wrote, "but an ignorant old woman, but I have seen a great deal of courts; and I do really think, that without having any of the old Roman virtue, it is wiser for any great man not to be a Premier Minister, which, if we should ever happen to have a weak or an ill King, must lead a terrible life, besides being very insecure; and, consequently, it would be best for King, as well as the nation, and everybody that has any property, to have all things done in Council without a Premier Minister, which I have often heard is the law." On which Lord Hailes truly observed, "Yet the Duchess knew that under her *own* Administration all things were not done in Council," because in it there was, in fact, "a Premier without personal responsibility."

On the 20th August, 1737, Lady Walpole died at Chelsea, where the Minister had for many years kept up a costly establishment and entertained his Parliamentary friends. Saturday and Sunday he usually spent at Richmond Lodge, where a few of his most intimates visited him, and over whose more exclusive and fastidious luxury presided the young and beautiful Maria Skerritt, to whose society his leisure hours were devoted, and whom he eventually married.

The first Lady Walpole was the daughter of a city merchant, and brought him a considerable fortune. The marriage was

[1] Hardwicke to Newcastle, 16th June, 1737:—*MS.*

never, perhaps, a very happy one, and the terms of mutual licence on which the Minister and his wife lived were almost incredible.

Without apparently intending it, the Prince deeply offended his father by quitting Hampton Court without notice for St. James's, where his first-born son, the future George III., was born. Notwithstanding repeated apologies, he was, with the advice of Walpole, ordered to leave the Palace, and for some time was compelled, with his wife, to reside at Norfolk house, where, to mark his contumacy, he was deprived of the customary guards. He soon after purchased Carlton House from Lord Burlington, and lived there during the remainder of his life. He had the old mansion at Kew for a country house, where all the notable of Opposition congregated.

Lord Bute, a Scotch representative Peer, till then but little known, and the young Cornet of Horse, William Pitt, deprived of his commission for his speech on the proposed increased allowance, were appointed to the new Household. It had originally been formed from amongst the friends of Government, and many of those who composed it still wished to maintain their position in the Ministerial party. After the open rupture with the Court their position became not a little embarrassing; and when his Royal Highness, in the autumn of 1737, appointed Lyttelton his Secretary, Lords Carnarvon and Baltimore, with Messrs. Herbert, Montagu, and Evelyn, took prudent council together, and gave the Prince notice that though willing to vote in Parliament on all questions relating to him personally as he might desire, they must, in other respects, act with the Ministry. Lyttelton was, indeed, one of the foremost in Opposition of Cobham's connection, and owed his new place in the Household apparently to this circumstance. He was not wanting in parts, but was said to be irritable in temper, reckless in counsel, unpractical in speech, and more of a clever essayist than a suasive orator.

Walpole tarried at Houghton longer than usual, being in the hands of his physicians, who were obliged to operate from time to time for the grievous malady, whose progress they could but retard. His house was full of company, and he hoped before Christmas to be again in town; till when he desired the Secretary to make his apologies for failing to render "his infinite duty and respect to the Queen," for whom alone, perhaps, in all the

world he felt unalloyed respect and affection.[1] Next day he had tidings of her Majesty's illness, which her indomitable spirit had too long concealed, but which at last filled all around her with dismay. Sir Robert wrote that the news had put them in such consternation that he knew not what to say or do. A later letter had made them hope that the worst was past, and in that persuasion only he was still at Houghton under the promise of news being sent him of any change. "God send us good news. The event is great, and would prove wonderful."[2] Henry Pelham, who was staying at Houghton, told his brother that Walpole was not in a condition to come up to town, and for some reason, which he did not explain, that he himself could not leave. "There was some company there that Sir Robert trusted in everything, and was fonder of than ever, but the last people should wish to be with on such occasions." The following day Walpole prepared to set out for town. The allusions by Pelham to the company at Houghton are, in some degree, explained by the fact, not yet avowed, that she who then presided at the hospitable table of the Minister had shortly before been made his wife, but as yet was only known to his visitors as the fair daughter of Skerritt, and probably many of his visitors at this time were unrecognised by Court and fashion.

The physicians were informed too late of the real cause of the Queen's suffering, and in the course of a few days the case was pronounced hopeless. The devotion shown by George II. from the moment he became aware of her danger, and his solicitude about all that related to her comfort is the best trait related of him. He seldom left her apartment, and day and night was constantly by her side. The patience and magnanimity of the Queen throughout her sufferings, which were great, touched the hearts of all about her. Her daughters, Caroline and Emily, and the faithful Vice-Chamberlain, whom next to her own family she seems to have regarded with affection, attended her to the last. Sir Robert was admitted more than once to her presence, and she conversed with him composedly as she was wont on public affairs. Conscious of the imminency of her condition, she exclaimed, "I have nothing to say to you, my good Sir Robert, but to recommend the King, my children, and the Kingdom to

[1] To Newcastle from Houghton, Nov., 1737.—*MS.*

[2] To Newcastle, 10th Nov., 1737.—*MS.*

your care." The pride of the Minister could not blind him to the significance of words so singular addressed to him in presence of the Monarch whom he had for years been governing through the Queen. For once he misread the mind of Royalty and feared that the unveiling of his own real mastery in the hour of death would never be forgiven. He could not deny himself the satisfaction of retailing the notable words of the Queen, to many who were certain to repeat them; yet he could not believe that the King would remember them without mortification, if not resentment. But in this he soon found that he was in error. On the evening of the 20th November, the Queen asked Dr. Tesier in a calm voice how long it was possible that all this could last. Too soon he feared she would be released from pain. She muttered faintly, *Tant mieux!* and not long afterwards expired.

Far from Court and its vicissitudes many thoughtful men lamented her loss.

Townshend, resolved to put away ambition, spent the residue of his days in the tranquil care of his health and his estate. Both had suffered during his official life, and they were equally benefited by the resumption of country pursuits to which he devoted his remaining years. Letters (unaddressed, but probably to old Horace Walpole, with whom he had never quarrelled) give us a picture of the ex-Secretary at Rainham. "You will easily imagine, from the consternation you saw in town, the effect the news of the Queen's death has had in these parts. I shall ever retain a great regard for her memory, though it was my fate to be often in a very different way of thinking from her Majesty, which was the chief reason that induced me to retire (as I may venture to tell you in confidence), as fortune had no share in this resolution. So it has been attended with greater success than I could possibly have proposed to myself. I have been perfectly happy for seven years past, and more than that, have got a relish of that way of life which, in my opinion best becomes, at my age, one who has had a great share among the busy part of mankind. The making myself, my children, and those about me cosy, as far as my circumstances will allow, is now my chief employment, and takes up so much of my time that I have as little of that upon my hands as when I was Secretary. My thoughts are all confined to the little circle in which I move; and, if I am not very much deceived, my endeavours

succeed at least so far as to make my family and neighbours very unwilling to lose the little that remains of me. Farther than this I have no desires, save that the few friends I have in town would not entirely forget me. Yours affectionately, &c., TOWNSHEND."

He had not, indeed, outlived the political feelings of earlier days, and still watched with solicitude the course of national policy, characteristically taking a more tenacious view of the duty which the Executive owed to the commerce and industry of the country, than was as yet acknowledged by Walpole. "I fear our influence and credit abroad are but little, and from that reason the inconveniences you mention may attend a breach with Spain; but the loss of the plantation trade would be such a wound to the wealth and navigation of this Kingdom as it has never yet felt since its being a trading nation, and if the difficulties under which the Spaniards by their captures have already laid us be not removed, our merchants must give over trading to those parts. It is my opinion, therefore, that no dangers ought to deter us from entering into such measures as may oblige the Spaniards to treat us with the same regard their Crown did formerly pay to this nation. But you will, perhaps, say that I am of a reckless spirit and must always be doing; and in this opinion of me most of my neighbours will, I fear, join with you; for about two years since I formed a scheme against the corn merchants which has succeeded to the entire satisfaction of the farmers, and now I am attempting one against the butter factors, but not with the same prospects of success; and now I am engaging in a burning project by which I oblige myself to enclose at least five hundred or six hundred acres of land into enclosures of thirteen or fourteen acres. How far my character may suffer by these projects I cannot tell; of this I am sure that my purse does, but in return I pass my time with great happiness and content, and that ought, in my opinion, to be our chief care whilst we are in this world."[1]

[1] 28th Nov., 1737, and 27th March, 1738.—*MS.*

CHAPTER XV.

THE SPANISH WAR.

1738.

Debate on Standing Army—Election Petitions—Complaints of Merchants against Spain—Jenkins' Ear—General Agitation—Walpole's Unpopularity—Spanish Aggression—Should the Spanish Flota be Seized?—Cabinet Disagreed—Newcastle's Subserviency to Clamour—Convention with Spain—Excited Debate—Pitt's First Telling Speech—Argyll Breaks with the Ministry—Walpole for Peace, but Outnumbered—War Declared—State of the Navy—Rejection of Pension Bill—Hardwicke Absents Himself from Cabinet—Hervey Privy Seal.

OPPOSITION once more renewed the party claim for reduction of the army. There was no need of troops to meet an enemy abroad, or to keep down sedition at home; and commissions, it was daily alleged in the Press, were used only as a means of patronage, the price being kept high to render them exclusive. Ministers easily retained, however, the limited number hitherto employed; and the fears expressed by Shippen and Pulteney that a force of 17,000 men might prove a danger to public freedom evoked little response, either in or out of doors. Speaker Onslow tried to scare those who came by night to harass Ministers, reporting what they said, and what was said of them; and he reminded the House that taking such a liberty was an unhallowed infraction of privilege. Walpole, Yonge, and Winnington thanked him effusively for his offer of retrograde encroachment on the freedom of the Press; but Wyndham and Pulteney gave warning that public curiosity, once allowed to listen, would not tamely submit to be told it must be deaf and dumb; and the door, long left ajar, was never closed again.

Votes becoming scarcer and more valuable than heretofore, the struggle on election petitions became keener, and the resort to all manner of public and private influence more unscrupulous.

A contest for Windsor ending in a tie between Lord Vere, Ministerialist, and Mr. Oldfield on the other side, the question of double return was decided in a full House by a large majority in favour of the Government. It was a struggle between the Marlborough and St. Albans interest, and the Duchess was more than usually vigorous in canvassing, and vehement in her denunciation of all concerned in her defeat. A poor soldier, who had lost an arm at Oudenarde, having refused to vote at the election against the relative of his old commander, was threatened with the loss of his pension, on which she sent forthwith to say that she would make it good to him; and she tells with scorn how the King had said at Court that Windsor was his borough and must return Lord Vere. Grenville was pledged to side with Opposition; but though a near relative of Lord Cobham, he was not ashamed to express regret at being unable to do so because his wife was a relative of the other candidate. Mr. Compton, a nephew of Lord Wilmington, proved false to his friends, though he had not been in the House if Marlborough and Spencer had not chosen him in Northamptonshire, which her Grace hoped they would remember "if this country subsisted so long as to have another election." Dorset commanded one of his sons to break his word, and there were numerous other recusants.

Mr. Hay, a Commissioner of the Victualling Office, one of the dutiful retainers of Newcastle, naturally wished his return made safe for Seaford; and thought it would save time and trouble if his patron expressed publicly what he expected to be done. Non-interference by peers at elections was still sometimes invoked as constitutional tradition; but it had come to be too habitually regarded as of little avail. It was but a withered fig-leaf of decency which no one ventured rudely to brush away. Newcastle, however, disdaining meaningless hypocrisy, thought it might as well disappear; and, conscious that he was himself the electing faculty of the borough, he issued an Address "to the Bailiff, jurats, freemen, and inhabitants of Seaford": "I need not tell you, gentlemen, how glad I shall always be to do everything in my power for the service of the Corporation of Seaford in general and of every particular member of it; and I shall only add that the continuance of your favour to Mr. Hay on this occasion will be an addition to the many obligations already

conferred on, gentlemen, your most obedient and humble servant, HOLLES NEWCASTLE." The Lord of the Admiralty was of course returned.

Grave topics agitated both Houses and the Cabinet. Petitions from the merchants engaged in the trade with Spain and the Indies set forth in highly-coloured language the affronts and injuries they had recently endured, and prayed that they should be heard by counsel at the bar. Walpole rebuked the tendency to rhetoric and exaggeration which the suggestion of counsel seemed to indicate. Parliament did not need forensic skill to lead them to judge justly of the facts in question; and without moving any amendment he left it to the Speaker, who ruled that petitioners, conformably to precedent, must choose whether they would state their case themselves, or by the lips of counsel only; and Government did not venture to question their having the alternative. Vehement speeches were made in support of Pulteney's motion to produce the whole of the correspondence that had taken place between London and Madrid; but the danger of precipitating a quarrel while negotiations were still pending was effectually urged by Sir W. Yonge, Sir Chas. Wager, and Henry Pelham. Seamen and supercargoes at the bar of the House gave vivid accounts of what they had suffered. Enormities, hardly utterable, drew eager audiences, who broke up full of threatenings of national revenge. Some time before the *Rebecca*, trading to Jamaica, had been boarded by a Garda Costa, and its crew cruelly ill-used. In anonymous publications, the story had been made the theme of violent invective, and the captain, Robert Jenkins, became the hero of article and ballad for the hour, as having suffered torture and mutilation. But the effect on Cabinet or Parliament was not appreciable, though he seems to have turned it to account at the East India House, by getting the command of one of the Company's ships. When, however, Sir C. Wager's prophecy of the danger of showing indifference to outrage on the high seas began to be realised, the case was cited in popular proof of the systematic wrongs inflicted on an unprovoking people; and Jenkins was appealed to as a conclusive witness to verify the tale. In after years Burke did not hesitate to treat the story he told of being half hanged three times, and losing one of his ears, as a party fable; but it was published

and re-edited till every household in the Kingdom knew the ghastly details; and such a chorus of indignation rose as made it difficult for Ministers to keep back the correspondence between the two Governments, whereby they still hoped to fend off war.

On presenting the report of the Committee, Murray appealed, as counsel for the petitioners, with all his wonted versatility and vigour for reparation of their wrongs. Pulteney moved a string of resolutions which Walpole dissuaded the House from confirming as calculated to bring on war; but the Peers on the same day adopted the language of menace after a warm debate, in which prominent Ministerialists took the belligerent side. The King was obliged to affect the same tone in reply to their Address; and this encouraged the Opposition in the Lower House to return to the charge.

Pulteney brought in a Bill practically asserting the *lex talionis*, and holding out the prospect of compensation to the injured merchants that would have been afforded by sudden and indiscriminate seizure of the Plate fleet. The Minister's superiority of knowledge and judgment enabled him to recall the House to the perilous fact that the bulk of the splendid argosies they were urged to seize belonged to the traders of France, Holland, and other nations of Europe, with whom they were at peace; and that nearly the whole of the property afloat was insured in England. The Bill was rejected by a large majority, and an early prorogation afforded breathing time for renewed endeavours to accommodate the points in dispute. But the lust of revenge blinded the public to the difficulties of the question, and Walpole was becoming so unpopular that any policy was odious if identified with his name.

Walpole lost no time in securing an influence that might replace that of the illustrious friend he had lost. Within twelve months of the Queen's death Sir Robert authorised a warrant to the Lords Justices of Ireland charging £3,000 a-year on the revenue of that Kingdom for thirty-one years, to be paid to his son, Lord Walpole, and his son-in-law, Lord Cholmondeley, in trust for Madame de Walmoden, thenceforth recognised as the mistress of the King. In the list of pensions laid before the Irish Parliament the names of the Trustees only were given, though that of the recipient was well-known.

In 1738 the Cabinet consisted of:—

POTTER	*Archbishop of Canterbury*
WILMINGTON	*President*
GODOLPHIN	*Privy Seal*
HARDWICKE	*Chancellor*
WALPOLE	*First Lord of the Treasury*
DEVONSHIRE	*Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland*
GRAFTON	*Chamberlain*
NEWCASTLE AND HARRINGTON	*Secretaries of State*
SIR C. WAGER	*Admiralty*
H. PELHAM	*Paymaster General*
RICHMOND	*Master of the Horse*
DORSET	*Lord Steward*
ROXBURGH	*Secretary of Scotland*
PEMBROKE	*Groom of the Stole*
ARGYLL	*Master of the Ordnance*

In reward for many party services by tongue and pen, Hervey claimed the Privy Seal. It had for a time been held by Lonsdale, and more recently by Godolphin, whose displacement Newcastle resisted to make room for one by whose bitter sarcasm he had been often stung.

Assuming the function of Cabinet Whip, he wrote to his Ducal brethren, urging their attendance. Richmond replied that Goodwood was full of company, of whom he gave a list, and that he did not contemplate being drawn from his hounds till after Christmas, when he promised to be punctual in their meetings at the Cockpit, to help in settling the Speech from the Throne.[1]

Argyll manifested much ill-humour at what he deemed too long forbearance shown to Spain. Before a numerous company Walpole said that upon the prospect of a war the King and his Grace would always be angry because they both had a mind to command the army, which was impossible for either of them to do.

It was with reference to foreign policy that the first symptoms appeared of decay in the judgment and influence of the chief Minister. In domestic policy he had for many years been supreme; and though incessantly assailed by Opposition boasting of the highest rhetorical resources, he was able to keep the confidence of the King, to preserve unbroken acquiescence, if not unity, in the Cabinet, and to carry most of the measures he

[1] 24th November, 1738.—*MS.*

deemed indispensable. Carteret, Chesterfield, and Bathurst vainly inveighed against the extravagance of a standing army, while Pulteney, Shippen, Wyndham, and Pitt wasted their eloquence in denouncing his domineering and corrupt sway. For a time the country had lain in a political torpor, from which the utmost ingenuity of individual ambition had seemed unable to arouse it. The awakening came at last from afar. The Spanish navy rigorously and ruthlessly overhauled the contraband trade with their American Colonies carried on from British ports. The smuggling profits were large, and those of the slave trade larger. On being threatened, attempts were made in its defence by the use of arms; gradually the tropic seas were covered with privateers and red-rovers, whose daring seamanship enabled them to elude the Spanish men of war; and whose ghastly deeds served rather to stimulate the lawless spirit of adventure and revenge at home. Notwithstanding the check put by Parliament on the exaggerations of the previous year without measuring nicely the effects that might ensue, Opposition Peers and Members of Parliament devoted themselves to depicting conflicts and heightening the colour of the injuries sustained. Walpole sought to negotiate a Convention with a view to clear up doubtful questions of maritime jurisdiction and to lessen the excuses for collision on the high seas.

Sir B. Keene, the able Resident at Madrid, laboured assiduously, as he was bidden in the private letters of Sir Robert, to soothe the irritability of the Spanish Court, and to keep in mind the common interest of the nations in the continuance of peace. From Newcastle he received more than one despatch in the opposite sense, and was sometimes sorely puzzled what to do. But the balance of his own judgment coinciding with that of the chief Minister, he was glad to get the Convention for the payment of damages signed, notwithstanding a counter claim for two-thirds of the amount, said to have lain over from the War of the Succession, which he consented to transmit without specific note or comment. Ere the Convention could be made public in England, the popular temper had got thoroughly heated with the old passion for naval combat; and the cry was raised on all sides that reprisals should be ordered forthwith by our ships on the *Flota* returning home. The Minister disdainfully argued against such a breach of international amity. But

in Cabinet Newcastle betrayed his readiness to yield to clamour; and his example threatened to prove contagious. When the Convention was at length made known excitement boiled over. The 6th of March being fixed for its consideration, a hundred Members were said to have taken their seats at eight o'clock in the morning, and a long day was occupied in receiving petitions and hearing complaints at the Bar. Next day nothing else was done, and it was not until the eighth that Horace Walpole, as the oldest diplomatic hand available, was put forward to defend a compromise which at heart he disapproved. Never suasive or felicitous, he toiled through details without disarming any angry prejudice or anticipating any serious objection. Sir T. Sanderson led the storming party against the proposed Address of thanks. He declared that ninety-nine out of every hundred persons viewed the compromise as delusive and dishonourable; futile as a means of averting resort to the sword; and lowering to the credit of the nation. Others followed in a similar strain, and were but ineffectively answered on the Ministerial side. But the event of the day was the first telling speech delivered by Pitt, which friends and foes concurred in extolling to the skies. Notes in the handwriting of Sir Robert, during the debate, fully confirm the impression made by the young tribune. "Are we," he exclaimed, "any longer a nation, or what is an English Parliament, if, with more ships in your harbours than in all the navies of Europe, with above two millions of people in your American Colonies, you will bear to hear of the expediency of receiving from Spain an insecure, unsatisfactory, dishonourable Convention? I call it no more than it has been proved to be in this debate. It carries the fallacy of downright subjection in almost every line. It has been exposed in so many glaring lights that I can pretend to add nothing to the conviction and indignation it has raised. As to the Right of Search, it is, indeed, mentioned in the preamble, but stands there as the reproach of the whole, as the strongest proof of the submission that follows: on the part of Spain, a usurpation, an inhuman tyranny claimed and exercised over the American seas; on the part of England, an undoubted right by Treaties, and from God and Nature, declared and asserted in Resolutions of Parliament, which are referred to the discussion of Plenipotentiaries on the same foot. Spain has told you that you shall steer a due course

if you draw near to her coasts; and though from the circumstances of the navigation you must do so, you shall be seized and confiscated. What is the use of treaties, if there is not dignity and vigour to enforce the observance of them? This intolerable grievance has arisen and has grown upon you, treaty after treaty, through twenty years of negotiation. I will not attempt to enter into a dark, confused, and scarcely intelligible account, but conclude with a word upon it in the light of a submission and an adequate reparation. Spain stipulates to pay to England £95,000; by a preliminary protest of the King of Spain the South Sea Company is to pay £68,000 of it. If they refuse, Spain is still to pay the £95,000, but how does it stand then? The Assiento contract is to be suspended. You are to purchase this sum at the price of an exclusive trade, pursuant to a national treaty, and of an immense debt of God knows how many hundred thousand pounds due from Spain to the South Sea Company. Here is the submission by Spain of a stipulated sum, a tax laid upon the subjects of England under the severest penalties, with the reciprocal accord of an English Minister, as a preliminary that the Convention be signed. This Convention is nothing but a stipulation for national ignominy, an illusory expedient to baffle the resentment of the nation, a truce without a suspension of hostilities on the part of Spain; on the part of England a suspension of the first law of Nature—self-preservation and self-defence—a surrender of the rights and trade of England to the mercy of Plenipotentiaries; and in this infinitely highest and most sacred point—future security—not only inadequate, but directly repugnant to the resolutions of Parliament and the promise from the Throne." Henry Fox was put up to answer him, and the discussion lasted till past midnight, when 260 to 232 voted with Government. But Walpole is said to have muttered: "We must stop this Cornet of Horse." To the surprise and perplexity of their friends, Pulteney, Sandys, and Wyndham announced their resolution to refrain on the following day. Pulteney assigned as his reason his reluctance to being a party even by acquiescence in a bargain which sacrificed practically our right to compensation. The Chancellor judicially held in poise the principles of international law; but he alternately deprecated hasty measures tending to a rupture with a friendly State, and denounced the outrages committed on

our merchantmen in terms so inflammatory that Walpole, standing on the steps of the throne, was said to have exclaimed audibly, "Bravo, Colonel Yorke, bravo!"

Argyll resolved to break with the Ministry; and on the Convention with Spain threw away the scabbard. His speech, carefully prepared, was delivered in his best manner, and produced a sort of sensation. The old Duchess Sarah, who formerly loved him not, but had now forgiven him, thought he would do more for Opposition than any other three men could effect; and as salary was not an object with him she hoped they would turn him out, and make the quarrel thereby irreparable. Newcastle wished it to be believed that Hardwicke leaned his way; while Walpole claimed him as a supporter of his moderate views. Hatred of Spain and lust of war spread to all classes, and Leicester House openly sympathised with the national feeling. The Cabinet felt no longer stable of purpose; and when the Prince of Wales did not scruple to appear in the streets, surrounded by a frantic multitude shouting for revenge, Ministers began to waver. Words between Newcastle and the First Lord of the Treasury ran high, and finding that a majority of his colleagues were against him, his Grace suggested that he and his friends should retire. But when this threat failed to shake the resolution of Sir Robert, he and they thought better of it and quietly remained.

Walpole's policy was peace, and so long as he retained his ascendancy in the Cabinet and at Court, his rivals found it hopeless to drive the nation into war. But from the death of the Queen his supremacy in the palace was undermined; and from the threatened secession of the Newcastle section, his authority in the Cabinet was shaken. Contrary to his own judgment and in spite of many and varied efforts to avert what he deemed a great error, he began to yield. In the main he considered unjust the complaints of the merchants who sought to carry on a contraband trade with South America, and whose protests against the right of search by Spanish ships of war, though justified by the law of nations, were vehemently backed by the Opposition, and by several of his own colleagues. Many years afterwards, not a few of those engaged in blowing up that flame confessed that they were sensible how factious their conduct had been, and how little their counsels had served their country. But to em-

barrass the Minister there was nothing they would not have done, and the demand for war was popular because it was one "which threatened little bloodshed, and which promised victories that were attended with something more solid than glory. A war with Spain was a war of plunder." [1] No man saw and felt all this so clearly as the hitherto undaunted Minister; and had he been advised by his best friends he would have retired with honour and left to others the responsibility of a course he disapproved. But power by long use and by long abuse, had become indispensable to him. His habits of expenditure had gradually become so lavish and so loose that, notwithstanding the large profits and perquisites he enjoyed, he could not bring himself to fling away official income. His private estate in Norfolk, originally small, had been indeed increased; but over Houghton there still hung a mortgage of many thousand pounds.[2] He had given valuable offices to his eldest and his younger sons, but the delicate and dilettante Horace, and the uncle whose name he bore were still insufficiently provided for. Above all, he could not bring himself to subside into a private station, and though he made an offer to retire at the beginning of 1739 he readily availed himself of some deprecating words of the King to put his continuance on the score of public duty. To over-trump his rivals, a Speech from the Throne denounced the policy of Spain; and war being declared, the Minister did not scruple to adopt belligerent language, and thus justify all that had been said by those who had goaded him at length to hostilities. The results abroad were unfortunate. One expedition after another failed, and in the following Session he was accused loudly of mismanagement and short-handedness.

Uninterrupted success had at length demoralised the Minister. He had ceased to believe in the worth of any judgment but his own; or to regard professions of political conscience as anything more than the showy costume to be worn out of doors. So long as he could manage his master at Kensington, and frown or laugh down unsatisfied expectants at Whitehall, his vast power of administration would remain. Taxation was light, the country was growing fat; religious differences no longer caused serious trouble; the colonies were still in their swaddling clothes;

[1] Burke's "Thoughts on a Regicide Peace."

[2] Horace Walpole's account of his conduct.

republicanism was only to be found in the fossil state at Geneva, Venice, and the Hague. The old military monarchies diplomatised or demonstrated now and then about scraps of border-land or the reversion of a duchy without entangling our Government in courtesan squabbles, and though in country houses the health of the Pretender might still be occasionally drunk in ambiguous terms late at night, the Hanoverian succession seemed about as secure as national acquiescence and a Septennial Parliament could make it. Walpole grew over-confident, careless, supercilious, insolent. He called the Cabinet together more seldom than formerly; neglected uninfluential friends oftener than of yore, pooh-poohed earnest remonstrances at jobs too bare-faced to be defended, and summarily confirmed favours and promotions suggested by unaccountable whim or indefensible partiality. He was drunk with power. His colleagues chafed at his arbitrary decisions come to before they met in Council; and such of them as valued, more than pay or patronage, the privilege of being of the Cabinet, resented silently, then half inaudibly, and at last in sympathetic grumblings at each other's country houses, the assumption of exclusive wisdom by the First Lord of the Treasury. For a good while before he could be awakened to what was thus going on around him, the dry rot of discontent had made insidious way in the fabric of Administration; and it was not without surprise and vexation that he occasionally found a crumbling beneath his unceremonious touch where he would have sworn coarsely all was staunch and firm.

Newcastle's social vanity and his expanding pretension to dictate in divisions, made him especially susceptible of neglect in Council. Sir Robert had grown tired of making believe that he would not decide on legislative measures or give hints to ambassadors affecting the peace of Europe without previously inquiring how little his Grace had to say at great length on the subject. The wise Chancellor had always enough to do in his own department, which he conducted to perfection, to take ill any omission of the kind. With Devonshire and Pelham it was often, though not regularly, a pleasure to confer, and neither affected to be affronted when not asked beforehand their opinion of what was proposed to be done. But lesser men were less able to feel with equanimity that they were regarded as of no account.

If a candle could tell its mind it would hardly deny a sense of mortification at being snuffed out even by a great man, though certain of being relighted an hour after. And when several tapers, even of the finest wax, are thus dealt with simultaneously, it is not possible that the atmosphere should be quite free of reproachful odour even in the palace of a King.

Certain of Walpole's colleagues felt themselves unable to resist the atmospheric influence around them. At a conference on the evening of the first of June, the subject forced itself upon attention. The First Lord began in a strain of melancholy to complain, not personally, but in relation to things and circumstances. Hardwicke endeavoured to show him that his difficulties arose chiefly from a fixed opinion in many, and a suspicion in some of his friends, that nothing would be done against Spain, "that as things had come to a crisis, and Spain had broke the Convention, there was a new event, upon which even he might take a vigorous part without contradicting any opinion or measure he had avowed before, and that this was new ground to go off upon." Walpole allowed a great deal of this, and Hardwicke really thought he was determined to act with vigour. He went so far as to say that he thought it advisable to begin immediately, for that nothing would be more embarrassing than that Spain should now offer to pay the £95,000 attended with a suspension of the former Treaty. The object was to settle what should be proposed in Cabinet. It was decided that orders should be sent forthwith to Admiral Haddock, to lie before Cadiz, and commit all kind of hostilities at sea; to strengthen Brown's squadron, and send like orders to him as to hostilities, and in particular to seize the galleons which were starting for America, to send for eight regiments from Ireland, and augment them to English numbers; notice to be given to our merchants in Spain; and immediate orders for the press gang to be issued in the chief seaport towns. Sir Robert was averse to expeditions, but apprehended that the Field Marshal might press something of that kind. He threw out, "Who should propose this scheme as his own? And it was soon agreed that it could be nobody but himself or the Duke."

When the cry for war grew loud enough, Newcastle, who had previously run with the hare, thought it time to hunt with the hounds. We have a long memorandum in his own hand of

proposals to be made in Cabinet, some of which were anticipated by the Admiralty and War Office. Letters of marque to be granted, and the Indians to be let loose on the Spaniards, which was postponed until Lord Granard should have arrived, with more of detail.[1]

Yet in changing front Walpole's self-content misgave him. By a series of measures little understood, and for which he was not weak enough to expect any thanks, he had contrived to reduce the public debt from fifty to forty-six millions in ten years; and the annual charge was little more than two millions. He had, indeed, sequestered the Sinking Fund, remitted half the land-tax, and dissipated £1,453,400 Secret Service money, to hush sedition at home and keep Jacobites in pay abroad. But for the indulgence of these clandestine luxuries, he might have brought down the Debt to a lower sum. But he probably viewed with sinister satisfaction the practical forgetfulness by the community of the weight of paper on its back, and thought, as was said by one of his great successors, that there might be many worse things for a nation than a respectable debt. One of these he thought was war, which carried in its prolific womb the twin evils of more debt as well as more taxation. But the country, like Jeshuran, "waxed fat and kicked," and nothing the Minister, grown old and unpopular, could say could tame its anger. He reluctantly consented, first to the issue of letters of marque on the plea of exacting reprisals, and at length, on the 23rd of October, to a declaration of war. The confidence of the nation rested mainly on the old reliance in its superiority at sea.

When stripped to fight, its muscular strength stood thus: In the Mediterranean, under Admiral Haddock, twenty-two sail of the line, five ships of twenty guns, three fire ships, and two bomb vessels, to guard Minorca and Gibraltar; a squadron of ten to cruise between Cape Finisterre and Ferrol; a Channel Fleet of thirty men-of-war, two-thirds only being manned to their full complement; while Vernon had nine ships of the line, two bomb vessels, and five fire ships in the West Indies, and some sixteen more of various build and force on other stations. Against this array Spain had nine ships of the line and three frigates in Cadiz Bay, five line-of-battle ships at Carthagena, six defending

[1] Mem. 3rd June, 1739.—*MS.*

Ferrol; at Barcelona three men-of-war, a transport flotilla. France had at Brest a squadron of twenty-two, and at Toulon twelve, all ships of from fifty-four to seventy-four guns.[1] At first these hoisted a neutral flag, and were but a possible element of danger to be watched. A few months later they were added to the maritime equipment of Spain by a treaty under whose provisions the long period of amity with France was closed, and Louis XV., by the counsel of Madame de Pompadour, declared war.

When Sir Charles Wager told the Cabinet that the *Grafton* frigate was found to be unfit for sea, and Newcastle backed his proposal that another ship should be sent instead from the Home Station to strengthen the West India fleet, Walpole broke out into angry sneers against strengthening every defence but that of England, and challenged the Secretary of State to prove that what was asked for was but reasonable and, in fact, indispensable. The Duke said that if the order were refused, he could not be responsible. Walpole replied "Well, it is your war, and I wish you joy of it." The inextinguishable feud went on from day to day, when by his own showing in public argument the country was embarking in a contest without an ally in Europe, or the chance of one. Nothing, in short, can be more inexcusable than his submitting to be dragged against his deliberate judgment into a struggle which cost unnumbered lives, and added many millions to the public debt.

On former occasions both Houses had been communicated with in formal fashion on the outbreak of hostilities. The great Peace Minister, disliking the work he had to do, and knowing how inferior to that of Opposition was the debating power of his colleagues in the Lords, chose to depart from precedent and to overrule Newcastle in his unwise ambition to be allowed to open the War Budget to the Peers. Carteret and Chesterfield pounced on the omission as a proof of the temper of the Chief Minister, who thought no assembly worth consulting on the finance of the Kingdom but that in which his own voice could be heard. Were the Peers to abdicate their Constitutional share in legislative control, because a dozen or a score members of their order had become his retainers, and had been drilled into silence or acquiescence in his despotic decrees? The

[1] J. Wilson Croker. Supplemental Chapter to Hervey's "Memoirs."

feeble Lord President only provoked ridicule by his ineffectual attempts to repel such taunts; and when the Chancellor, never wanting at a pinch, stoutly contended that matters of taxation were not within the proper province of the Lords, and that the elective and responsible members of the Legislature might best be left to judge of what war loans or taxes their constituents could afford, the Duke of Argyll called him roughly to task for trifling with his hearers and toying with words and phrases as he might with immunity do when dealing with exceptions to a Master's report in Chancery. The dissent of forty in a House of one hundred and two sufficiently justified the minority of the Cabinet in their discontent, and some angry discussions in the Lower House with diminishing majorities did not render them more disposed to be submissive. But with the despot it was too late to mend. The consciousness of his ineffable superiority to the men whom he had chosen to surround himself with rendered him daily more impatient of their demand to participate in the exercise of dictatorial power. Alternative policy, coherent and comprehensive, they had none to offer, and his chief trial of temper lay in refraining from articulate expression of contempt.

The coolness of Ministerial friends brought the muster of Opposition nearly to an equality with them; and a Place Bill was flung out only by a majority of sixteen. Had it passed it would have carried such a reflection upon Members of the House that it would be difficult to obtain a Whig Parliament afterwards. "Our enemies are so elated with the success they have achieved that they are resolved not to move from town, but to fetch up the small number away in the country. They have already given notice of business. The Prince's Bill, The Repeal of the Septennial Act, the calling of Ministers to an account for some steps relating to the late Convention with Spain, will, some or all of them, be immediately brought before the House, and, in these circumstances, no man can be a friend to the Administration, and not determine to come up to town."[1] A Motion of Pulteney's for a call of the House betrayed indeed misgivings that the zeal of many was liable to chill; and Government, having more faith in their means of rallying aid in emergency than any which their rivals had at command,

[1] Newcastle to Ashburnham, M.P. for Hastings, 1st Feb., 1740.—*MS.*

ridiculed the appeal to patriotic urgency, though they abstained from objecting.

Their sense of weakness was evinced more signally when Sir Charles Wager introduced a Bill for the universal registration of seamen, in order to provide for more effectual impressment in time of war. In the past year but 21,000 men could be secured to man the Fleet, and many line-of-battle ships were consequently left in harbour practically useless. Indignant protests and petitions came from all the outports, shipowners and sailors exclaiming vehemently against a measure borrowed from the practice in France, and fraught with pretensions on the part of Government to reduce the whole mercantile marine to a state of subjection bordering on vassalage. The First Lord of the Admiralty defended the expedient in Parliament as he had in the Cabinet, on the ground alone that he knew of no other way of making sure of crews when suddenly required; but the Opposition was so strong that the measure had to be abandoned. The Lords of the Admiralty had laid an embargo on shipping from the 1st of February, and it was found to be such a hardship upon the export trade that a petition for its removal met with strong support when brought before the Commons, and though a motion for the referring of the petition to a committee of the whole House was rejected by one hundred and sixty-six to ninety-five, on the news of the taking of Portobello by Vernon,[1] Government resolved to withdraw the embargo early in April, on condition that the merchants should take on board one-third of landsmen; and that one in every four seamen should be liable to serve.

These and other random blows the First Lord turned aside in debate, and his sycophants rejoiced at his being unwounded—unwounded, but not unwasted. Long experience had taught him how uncertainly triumph in debate contributes to the ultimate judgment or the passing infatuation of the hour; and he began to look forward to the end. Perhaps even then he was not convinced of the truth which others had for some time seen, that retributive justice had come upon him for the long indifference and contumely wherewith he had treated every man out of Parliament or office who could influence opinion. Individually of small account, they were in the aggregate irresistible. In the Cabinet he might despise

[1] 17th March, 1740.

those whom he called his enemies; but there was one enemy he could not or would not overcome, and that enemy was Walpole.

For the fifth time, the Bill making it penal for any Member of Parliament to receive a bribe or pension was brought in, and Government, fearing a discussion on its merits in the feverish temper of the House, suffered it to pass through all its stages silently. The practice it proposed to check had become so notorious that personal details and flagrant instances were but too likely to crop up in debate; and, easy as it came to the unabashed head of the Treasury to deny any knowledge of unsavoury transactions, or, when that was impossible, to explain them away, he had grown too conscious of falling off in the complaisance of his majority needlessly to put his waverers just then to the proof. But, with hardihood all his own, he determined to signalise the rejection in the Lords of so indecent an exposure of the provident working of Constitutional Government under his guidance, by a chorus of solemn regret that anyone should propose a measure so superfluous, and one that, if enacted, could clearly be shown to be certain to prove abortive. His eldest son, who had done nothing for his peerage up to this time, and who had recently been made Auditor of the Exchequer, an office of £3,000 a-year for life, was entrusted with the exposition of his father's sentiments on the second reading: and the concise and cogent turn of his expressions could not have failed to suggest the source of his inspiration. "It had always been a maxim not to make any alterations in the fundamental forms of our Civil Government or Constitution unless some grievance or inconvenience sensibly felt rendered it absolutely necessary, for such alterations were usually attended with convulsions in the State, and the remedies provided were generally worse than the grievances meant to be cured. In time of war we ought to be even more cautious in departing from custom and usage than in time of peace. To suppose that there was corruption in the other House by ready money or by private pension, would be throwing a very great and unjust slander upon that assembly. This he should be very easy about, considering how often they had sent up this Bill, if it did not throw a very great and a very unjust slander upon Government. It was a crime to corrupt as well as to be corrupted, and to suppose that there was in the other House any man corrupted by the Crown was to suppose that the

Crown was guilty of an infamous crime which no noble lord, he supposed, would impute in the existing reign. The prerogative our Sovereign had of rewarding merit in what shape or in what manner he pleased was a fundamental part of the Constitution, and any change might be attended with inconveniences difficult to foresee. There were many sorts of public services which could not be immediately explained, which it would be inconsistent with the public good to divulge; and yet if this Bill were to pass his Majesty could reward no services in any Member of the other House without explaining or divulging those services, and giving that House a power to judge whether those services deserved such a reward; and this might occasion disputes between that House and the Crown, and would certainly discourage every Member of that House from rendering any secret service to the public. This would be a great prejudice to our Civil Government, and the frequent oaths that were to be introduced would be of the most dangerous consequence, not only to our established religion, but even to natural religion itself. For the sake of their own character, as well as the reason of the thing, he hoped they would give this proposal the same treatment it had so often met with before." To enforce these pious and patriotic views, his brother-in-law, Cholmondeley, spoke in a similar strain, Newcastle and Hervey being left to answer the arguments of Carteret and Argyll, and the Bill was rejected by a majority of twelve. On a subsequent day Bathurst moved a Vote of Censure on Government for not having sent a body of land forces on board the Fleet to enable Admiral Vernon to make good his success at Portobello; Argyll declaring that he no longer cherished any hopes or fears from either party, but deploring the condition of contempt whereinto Great Britain had fallen—no foreign Power courting her alliance or fearing her hostility; and the motion was rejected.

Hardwicke discerned, sooner than the rest, that the tide of their prosperity was on the ebb, and that nothing he could say or do would avail to stay their drifting out to open sea. But loyal to the rival chiefs, to both of whom he felt under many obligations, he sometimes pleaded the increasing weight of business on his part, and the lateness of the hour at which the Lords occasionally sat, as excuse for absence from conferences which oftener tended to widen differences than to close them.

His querulous Grace complained and hinted at desertion. The Chancellor thought it "hard to be suspected of a disinclination to meet one's friends, when he firmly believed that he had come to more nightly meetings than any man in his busy, laborious station ever did. He did not get home till half-past eight o'clock, and what time there was to attend consultations after that he left to his Grace's imagination. His indisposition and lowness of spirits had induced him to appoint his surgeon to come and bleed him; and to-morrow he set out for Carshalton, where he hoped quiet and rest would restore him. But if his Grace and Sir Robert thought it necessary that he should return on any particular occasion he would obey."[1]

At a Cabinet, at which Walpole, Newcastle, Hardwicke, Islay, Harrington, Sir C. Wager, and Sir. J. Norris were present, it was decided that all prizes taken from the Spaniards before declaration of war should be divided between the captors and merchants who had suffered loss, and that the value of prizes since war was declared should be divided amongst captors.[2]

Sharp disputes arose subsequently about the distributions between sailors and merchants, Newcastle contending for an equal division in all cases and Sir Robert for a preferential appropriation out of the most valuable captures to satisfy the original claims for compensation made by the West India trade before the outbreak of war. Each side held with feminine tenacity to their own opinion, and the united wisdom of supreme rule was rent in twain upon the question, the Great Seal vainly urging some compromise for sake of peace, and the Privy Seal trying to avoid giving any opinion in a controversy the beginning of which was before his time.[3]

Through culpable negligence, if not from a wish to affront a troublesome opponent, Argyll found himself included in an order to take charge of an ordinary detachment. He wrote to the Secretaries of State: "As I have had the honour to serve about four and forty years in the army, having seen the enemy with success in all the ranks through which I have passed; and as I am now the first officer of his Majesty's army, I humbly hope that he will be graciously pleased to excuse me from taking the

[1] To Newcastle from Powis House. "Past ten at night," 3rd April, 1740.—*MS.*
[2] Minute of Cabinet, 11th April, 1740.—*MS.*
[3] *MS.* Correspondence.

single charge of a particular number of troops, exclusive of any command over the rest of his Majesty's forces, unless such detachment be to march to the enemy, in which case I am ready to put myself at the head of twenty Grenadiers whenever it is his Majesty's pleasure to command me to do so."[1] The folly of their lordships' reply would be unbelievable if it were not on record. They briefly state, that having laid his letter before the King, they acquainted him that "the discharge which he required therein having never been given to persons of his Grace's rank and service, his Majesty did not think proper to give any orders upon it."[2]

Not content with this refusal, George II. was advised to authorise Argyll's dismissal from the army as the penalty of his exercise of the right of individual judgment. He acknowledged the insult with becoming spirit: "Your Lordships having signified to me his Majesty's pleasure of dismissing me from his service without communicating to me the reasons of it; yet by the method of my removal I humbly conceive it cannot have proceeded from my being accused of any military offence; may I not therefore hope, from his Majesty's justice and generosity, that I may be indulged with a discharge, importing that during the many years I have served the Crown, in the reigns of King William, Queen Anne, King George I., and his present Majesty, I have behaved myself honestly, faithfully, and honourably? This is a favour which every common soldier receives who is dismissed the service without being guilty of any military offence, and this is the request of yours, ARGYLL."[3]

Next morning he received for answer that the Secretaries of State had laid his letter before the Sovereign, who had made no order upon it.[4]

But where was Lord Islay all this time?

Speaker Onslow, presenting to his Majesty the Money Bills for the unusual sum of four millions sterling, unanimously voted for carrying on the war, Parliament was prorogued.[5]

In May the King set out for Hanover, accompanied by Harrington and Mde. Walmoden, created Countess of Yarmouth.

[1] Argyll to Newcastle and Harrington, 25th April, 1740.—*MS.*
[2] Newcastle and Harrington to Argyll, 27th April, 1740.—*MS.*
[3] To the Secretaries, 30th April, 1740.—*MS.*
[4] 1st May, 1740.—*MS.*
[5] 29th April, 1740.

From a loss of temper or a feeling that the ground whereon he had so long stood in haughty over-confidence, was beginning to tremble beneath him, Walpole indulged in capricious acts of self-assertion that probably tended to pique rather than daunt those who would undermine him. Courtesy and policy, as well as a higher sense of duty, dictated attendance at the Council of Regency when it sat even for the performance of perfunctory acts of State, and all the more because the Heir Apparent notoriously stood ill with his father, and was surrounded by the chiefs of Opposition. Yet Walpole chose frequently to absent himself, provoking the Prince to observe upon his neglect. The old subtlety of humour and of guile that had converted George II. from a suspicious client into a fast friend might have gone far to instigate the enmity of his son, and to perplex, if it did not baffle, the schemes of Leicester House. But he stayed away repeatedly from the Council of Regency without deigning to allege unforeseen detention by the gout at Chelsea, where the Cabinet were constantly called on to assemble.

Some notes found among Hervey's papers throw a curious light on the proceedings in the Cabinet at the time. Of the seven Dukes who were members of it, his Grace of Newcastle alone took any active part. He was at the time closely allied with the Chancellor and Lord Harrington, frequently contesting Walpole's measures and resisting his advice, but in turn submitting sometimes to be snubbed and put down by him. The particulars of one remarkable instance deserve to be recalled. Ten ships of the line under Sir Chaloner Ogle had been detached from Haddock's squadron cruising off the Spanish coast, and were ordered to join Vernon's fleet in the West Indies. At a Cabinet on the 28th of April Wager read letters showing that two Spanish squadrons had united at Ferrol, and formed an over-match for the Mediterranean fleet thus weakened in numbers. Misgivings prevailed as to the intentions of France, Lord Waldegrave's letters from Paris confessing his inability to penetrate the reserve maintained regarding them. Should an invasion of Ireland or England be suddenly undertaken upon a declaration of war the Channel Fleet was in no condition to encounter singly those which might thus be united against it. Walpole grew uneasy, and proposed to take immediate steps for the better manning of the ships at home, ten of which out of thirty were confessedly useless solely

for want of hands. The burthen of his song for months had been "Seamen, seamen, seamen!" But recruiting for the navy went on more slowly than ever, and the press-gang failed to secure anything like the complement of men required. This was owing in part to the unpopularity of the service, in consequence of the hardships endured and the mortality known to prevail in it, and partly to the numerous "protections," as they were called, which had from time to time been given to colliers, fishers, and out-going vessels, by which it was calculated upwards of 14,000 sailors were exempted from liability to be impressed. These "protections" he proposed to suspend to meet the exigency. It was no time for thinking of unpopularity; and though the clamour thus occasioned might be loud, he was ready to disregard it when the safety of the Kingdom was at stake. When Sir John Norris, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, was questioned as to the force immediately required, and how it could most quickly be got together, he submitted a plan for putting on board two regiments of the Line and 1,800 Marines to work the guns, and these 3,000 men would more than answer the demand. Newcastle and the Chancellor at once endorsed this recommendation, and, regardless of Walpole's remonstrances and arguments, founded on the smallness of the land forces which could ill afford to be thus further reduced, it was carried against him.[1]

Denmark had undertaken by treaty to furnish 6,000 men when required for a subsidy of £52,000 annually for three years. Eighteen months had expired, and we had now information that the Government of Copenhagen had secretly bargained to transfer to France the service of this force on the expiration of the treaty with Great Britain. The question arose at a meeting of the Cabinet whether any further payment should be made for the support of troops who might in a few months be employed against us. Harrington had been directed to ask for explanations which required a categorical answer on the subject, and had received an evasive reply; and it was agreed that no further instalment should be paid until the equivocal conduct of the Danish Court had been cleared up. Meantime an offer from the King of Sweden to supply an equal force of Hessians was adopted.[2]

[1] Proceedings of the Cabinet, May, 1740.

[2] Minute of Cabinet, Cockpit, 6th May, 1740.

The wretched state of the armament for defence by land at this period is indicated by a brief note of what took place at another meeting of the Cabinet[1] some days later: "11,000 men in Ireland in want of arms; and no man-of-war on the coast; 13,000 stand of arms reported to be still in the magazines in England, and 5,000 in Ireland, of which 2,000 were useless." The Board of Ordnance had contracted for the delivery of 12,000 muskets between September, 1739, and September, 1740, but of these only 3,000 had as yet been delivered. Utrecht and Liège were to be tried for an additional supply. No wonder the veteran Argyll had grown ashamed of his Civil comrades.

The Cabinet had got through the Session without defeat, but their escapes in division were too narrow to be reassuring. Electioneering recommenced in many quarters, and Newcastle's correspondence with his adherents in Sussex and elsewhere resumed its old proportions. Small freeholds in the market were reported duly for his consideration, and all manner of posts, pensions, and promotions were pressed upon his beneficent attention. Aspiring dignitaries of Church and State grew eloquent in praise of the Administration, and explicit in proofs of their activity on its behalf. The Bishop of Chester, who did not forget to whom he owed his first mitre, and believing in the possibility of an advancement to a richer one, furnished copious details of how he managed to secure a majority of the Chapter and the choir, and how Sir Watkin Wynn might best be baffled in Cheshire and even in Denbighshire. He was stout for war with Spain, "a vigorous prosecution of which would, he hoped, bring that King to reason."[2] About social improvements, the spread of the Gospel, Church extension, or even limitation of our profit from the sale of negroes (one of the points in dispute) he says not a word.

Lewes was a home farm in the Duke's political estate, but it needed top-dressing and manuring. Its thoughtful owner lay awake thinking what could be done to improve it; and the first thing to be done was to appoint a proper person to look after his interests, and to lay out work to be undertaken and the artificers to be employed. To take the names of all the empty houses in the interest and to fill them forthwith; and to propose persons for that purpose. To see what more voting houses could be got,

[1] 27th May, 1740.

[2] To Newcastle, 7th November, 1739.—*MS.*

either by building, repairing, or hiring, and how many might be taken on lease or bought. To consider what women were in houses that could be removed to make room for voters. To agree upon proper parish officers for the next two years in the several parishes; to keep a list of all the sure electors and of the doubtful ones, and what persons should apply to the latter, and the means of getting them; "to see what persons could be got off from the other side, and by what means. To consider a place for a proper sum of money to be lodged to be disposed of, and what the sum should be."[1]

The Chancellor had enough to do occasionally to keep the peace in Council. The First Lord's arrogance, grown in the course of official years, was difficult to bend, as was his tenacity in holding to his opinion once expressed decidedly on any question of importance. Newcastle's nearly equal term of office, and the never-ending adulation with which his vanity was fed by every rank and condition of men, had rendered him daily more difficult to bear with. He was fretful, captious, and exacting beyond belief; and Sir Robert took little pains to avoid ruffling his susceptibilities. Hardwicke, who understood them both thoroughly, seldom lost an opportunity of adjuring him to avoid needless discussions in Cabinet, where, right or wrong, he was sure (though Newcastle was not) that he would get the worst of it. At the end of a letter on important matters of inquiry pertaining to his whole department, the wise Chancellor added a postscript which probably had more use and meaning than all that went before. "I am glad to find you think our Friend is at present off from his point on what you call *the great question*" (regarding Spain). "I think nothing can tend to keep him off from it so much as avoiding altercation and disputing with him at our meetings and councils, as much as may be; and for which I own I do not, in his present turn and way of acting, see much occasion."[2]

Walpole felt his position in the Cabinet needed strengthening. Newcastle, with the aid of the Chancellor, Godolphin, and Harrington, and the occasional help of Richmond and Wilmington, had more than once asserted a transient ascendancy, mortifying to his once undisputed sway. Godolphin's easiness of dispo-

[1] 19th August, 1739.—*MS.* in the Duke's handwriting.
[2] Hardwicke to Newcastle, 29th September, 1739.—*MS.*

sition and near relationship to the Duke rendered him an adverse cypher on critical occasions, and he was told that he must relinquish the Privy Seal. To this no objection could properly have been made by his friends, or thought of by himself, had it not been for the intimation that his seat in the Cabinet was wanted for Lord Hervey, whose satiric pleasantries had too frequently been aimed at Newcastle, as Secretary of State. Godolphin wrote to Newcastle that "His Grace might be sure he could not but be extremely sorry that the disposition Sir Robert intended to advise the King to make of the Privy Seal upon his resigning it, was like to be so unacceptable to many of his friends, and in danger of producing consequences so unfortunate, if not fatal, to the Administration; but as the indulgence of leave to resign was wholly owing to Sir Robert's interposition, he must be advised by him as to the time of doing it."[1] The Duke replied that "he was extremely sorry that Sir Robert still persisted in his resolution, which he could not but think very unkind to many of his friends. But there was no way to prevent such an unfortunate, and, he was afraid, fatal incident to the Administration, but Godolphin's suffering himself to be persuaded to continue in his employment till the end of the Session. Nothing but a certain knowledge of the consequence of this step could make him mention, or at least press a thing which he knew was so disagreeable to him."[2] In other words, he wished Godolphin to defer tendering his resignation in order to avert his own. He actually threatened in an angry interview with Sir Robert at Claremont that Hardwicke, Pelham, and himself would retire if the obnoxious Hervey was appointed. But Walpole felt that he had gone too far to yield; the Privy Seal was promised to the heir of Ickworth, and the word of a chief Minister must not be forfeited. Bishop Hare, who owed his mitre to the friendship of his Grace, learned with regret the disunion prevailing in the Cabinet. In a conversation he had with Sir Robert the differences between Newcastle and him for three years past were recounted. He said it was hard for him to serve with the Duke. "As all these misunderstandings seem to have arisen from your Grace's uneasiness that he should have the lead and be first in the King's favour, give me leave, since this is the rock great men

[1] Godolphin to Newcastle, 12th Oct., 1739.—*MS.*
[2] To Godolphin, 12th Oct., 1739.—*MS.*

oftener split upon than any other, to say two things, which take to be most certain truths: one is, that while Sir R. is in the King's service, you can be but second; the other, that whenever his death, or any other incident shall make it be thought necessary to take in any of the patriots, they will never suffer you to be the first. If you would conjure your friends to tell you their real sentiments, I'm persuaded you would find them all of the same opinion. The consequence, if this be so, is plainly this, that your Grace should again unite heartily with Sir R. with the same intimacy as formerly for the common cause, and live upon a good foot with his friends, and so be upon your guard against the patriots. If I did not find this to be the opinion of everybody, I should think it inexcusable in me to take the liberty of saying these things. Nobody living is privy, either directly or indirectly, to my writing this, and I desire your Grace not to trouble with any answer to it."[1]

Several changes were made in the Administration, Hervey being admitted to the Cabinet as Lord Privy Seal instead of Godolphin, and being replaced by Lord Sydney Beauclerk as Vice-Chamberlain. The Duke of Montagu became Master-General of the Ordnance, and the Duke of Bolton Captain of the Band of Pensioners. The Cabinet stood thus:—

POTTER	*Archbishop of Canterbury*
HARDWICKE	*Chancellor*
WILMINGTON	*President of the Council*
HERVEY	*Privy Seal*
DORSET	*Lord Steward*
GRAFTON	*Chamberlain*
RICHMOND	*Master of the Horse*
DEVONSHIRE	*Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland*
NEWCASTLE AND HARRINGTON	*Secretaries of State*
ISLAY	*Minister for Scotland*
WALPOLE	*Treasury*
SIR CHAS. WAGER ...	*Admiralty*
MONTAGU	*Master of Ordnance*
HENRY PELHAM	*Paymaster-General*
PEMBROKE	*Groom of the Stole*

Newcastle adhered to Walpole so long as it was clear that Sir Robert's influence was paramount, but he was amongst the

[1] Bishop of Chichester to Newcastle, 8th Oct., 1739.—*MS.*

first to discern the symptoms of its decay, and to promote it for his own purposes. The great Minister wrote his character in a word: his name is "Perfidy." Intellectually his natural gifts were few and of a very ordinary description. The contrast he presented with his shuffling, confused, and paltry manner, to the all-accomplished Carteret who had preceded him in the office of Foreign Affairs, drew forth on all sides expressions of contempt or mirth, and his demeanour, exacting from his subordinates, servile to the powerful, hurried in speech, and unmethodical in business, lavish of promises, and reckless in breaking them, fretful in temper, and vacillating in judgment, rendered him an object of incessant ridicule by opponents, and of misgiving on the part of political friends. George II. from the outset, disliked his mean ways, and irregular mode of conducting business, and despised his incapacity for the conduct of great affairs. Time served only to strengthen the Royal antipathy, and it needed all the tact and watchfulness of Walpole to ward off its open expression on the part of his Majesty, who could only be restrained on more than one occasion by prudential considerations. For in many respects the Duke was stronger than the King, and by dint of his vast Parliamentary influence wielded a power in Church and State which their nominal head was impotent to countervail.

Pelham guardedly noted expressions of dissatisfaction by the Prince when Walpole failed to attend the Council of Regency. The Paymaster-General was not surprised to hear that Newcastle spoke out when Sir Robert was not at their meetings. Why was he absent? Whatever were his faults, he was certainly not a man of whim; and the illness of his son, the cause no doubt of some anxiety, could hardly have been the reason. May there not have been to him a motive sufficiently strong in the sort of competing importance of the Two Councils which claimed respectively Executive and Administrative pre-eminence in the absence of the Court'? [1]

Certain acts of importance had to be decided by the Lords of the Regency, and Hardwicke had no little to do in preventing Walpole and Newcastle from openly differing. Henry Pelham and Horace Walpole did what they could to keep the breach from widening between their suspicious colleagues. Both expostulated roundly on the fatuity of their quarrelling, and stoutly

[1] Pelham to Newcastle, 28th June, 1740.—*MS.*

denied that there were any real grounds to justify it. Pelham went the length of praising Horace warmly to his Grace, and begged him to believe that he had no truer friend.[1]

The discontented Secretary would have had the tired Chancellor stay in town all autumn to back him up in controversies on all manner of questions. But having, as he said, made all his arrangements for leaving, he begged to be excused, for he felt that he required rest, being worn down with attendance at the Cockpit and in Court. If one were to be prevented by every incident that should arise, there would be no period of time at which one would be able to get away; if he saw that the King's or his Grace's real service required his stay, there was nothing he would not sacrifice to either. But, with great submission, that did not, he thought, appear to be the case on any of the points mentioned.[2] It was about this time that the Chancellor purchased from Lord Oxford the estate of Wimpole, in Cambridgeshire, where he spent the leisure hours of his subsequent life, and to which he became greatly attached. Hardwicke's long intimacy with Newcastle and the many favours he owed him suggested frequently recurrent rumours of his readiness to aid in the intrigues for modification of the Government. The absence of documentary proof of his complicity in schemes for superseding his chief has been relied on by eminent critics as sufficient ground to clear his reputation from the charge: and the discussion now of subordinate degrees of loyalty and bad faith would be a waste of time. Hardwicke's judicial habit of weighing conscientiously opposing facts and conflicting obligations must have often led him to condemn the imperious tone of Walpole, which, if he could, he would have honestly wished him to qualify or amend. On the other hand, the peremptory and essentially partisan temper of the Minister disqualified him from estimating fairly any resistance, however honest, to his will; while his impetuous and unscrupulous way of talking in private, and especially in his own house, furnished incessantly fresh fuel to the suspicions of those about him regarding all who thwarted him in seeming from time to time. His son Horace has accused the Chancellor with conspiring his father's overthrow. But he gives no proof beyond the reproaches of the statesman himself.

[1] To Newcastle, June, 1740.—*MS.*

[2] Hardwicke to Newcastle, 9th August, 1740.—*MS.*

A sample of the Duke's inveterate tendency to mystification is to be found in his mode of keeping an ordinary official act from the rest of his associates.

Special instructions were framed for Cathcart, who was about being sent on a special mission. Newcastle imagined that George II. would not dislike signing them himself at Herrenhausen, which would avoid communicating them to fifteen people. But this, like much else, was said in confidence to Harrington. Thus the Secretary was ready to achieve what he expected would prove a diplomatic advantage without letting his Cabinet colleagues before-hand into the secret.[1]

A treaty was signed at Hanover with Count Ostoin, Landgrave of Hesse, on the 9th June, by George II. to carry into effect the arrangement previously discussed by his Ministers for Hessian troops, of which Parliament knew nothing. Harrington sent his colleague the counterpart of the treaty, which he wished him to communicate to those lords who were acquainted with the particulars of the negotiation, before he left home. It concluded with the words: "*In quorum et magnum nostrum Magnæ Britanniæ Sigillum appendi fecimus. Debantur in Palatio nostro. Apud Herrenhausen, 9 June,* 1740."

As the Great Seal was in England it could not be affixed to an instrument signed at Herrenhausen, nor could any act pass under it there; but he desired the point to be considered at their meeting on Monday night, whether they might venture to alter it, or it might be sent back. If that company or the Lords Justices should be of opinion that they might change the words and make it *at Westminster*, he would not scruple to comply; and he thought that the King's signature would be no objection to the doing so, since it was the Great Seal gave force to the act, and the signature was only to signify this was the very instrument which he willed should pass under his Great Seal.

A complaisant Secretary was not quite sure which was right or which was wrong, and was only clear that it would be weak on his part, either to thwart his Majesty or his colleagues: and as he kept no copy in his office he begged the Duke to destroy his letter immediately, which his Grace was careful to forget to do.[2]

[1] To Harrington, 24th June, 1740.—*MS.*

[2] From Harrington, most secret, 14th June, 1740.—*MS.*

He forwarded the questionable communication to the Chancellor, who sent it back without the confirmation desired, not sealed, because he apprehended a difficulty arising upon it as now framed. If the Duke should write to Lord Harrington on the subject he begged of him not to mention all this reasoning; but merely say that a difficulty had arisen by the instrument being made to bear date out of the Kingdom, which it was necessary should be considered by the Lords.[1] The shade of Somers manifestly stood before him, and warned him off dangerous ground of complaisance to Royalty, where he had lost his way. The Lord Chancellor was evidently more afraid of what might be said in Parliament than of what might be thought at Hanover, which when it came to a supreme act to receive the Great Seal, the national instrument, it was necessary should be considered by Ministers, the wisdom of the Cabinet being above the authority of the Crown.

Though the Keeper of the Great Seal grumbled on occasion at his lot, others thought it had fallen to him in peculiarly pleasant places. Horace the younger, who was already developing his gift of cynical portraiture, notes: "Beside being in himself so great a man, what luck the Chancellor had in accidents! He was made Chief Justice and Peer (1733), when Talbot was made Chancellor and Peer. Talbot died in a twelve-month and left him the Great Seal, at an age when others were scarcely made Solicitors. The same year he married his son to the daughter of Lord Breadalbane, grand-daughter of the Duke of Kent, for whom he obtained a Marquisate and £8,000 a-year after his Grace's death; Kent died in a fortnight and left him all. People talk of fortune's wheel that is always rolling; troth, my lord Hardwicke has overtaken her wheel, and rolled along with it."[2]

An offer was made through Harrington to furnish the Board of Ordnance with some thousand stand of arms in store at Hanover, which Ministers, fearing it might furnish a new pretext for cavil in Parliament, referred to the Council of Regency. As their proceedings were public, a majority shrank from entering into the bargain, and without making any formal vote, persuaded Newcastle to write confidentially to his comrade that though "highly sensible of his Majesty's goodness in being willing to

[1] Hardwicke to Newcastle, 20th June, 1740.—*MS.*
[2] Horace Walpole to H. Conway.—*MS.*

part with a number of arms in store at Hanover, to supply the ordnance here, they were very apprehensive that if the manner of purchasing them were not managed with great prudence and discretion, it might be attended with inconveniences; and therefore they suggested that they should be contracted for in the name of some Hamburg merchant, and that the arms should appear to be the property of that merchant, and not to have come from his Majesty's own stores: which they thought might be done without much difficulty, and whether, for the sake of greater secrecy, this might not be managed by Mr. Trevor at the Hague, with some trader at Hamburg, under his general order to procure what quantity of arms he could get. If the bore were not exactly the same the arms would be of no use here; but if they could be furnished at the prices they could be furnished for at other places, they might be bought for the ordnance here. But they hoped Lord Harrington would take care that they should go under the name of a Hamburg merchant. But as to the arms that either had been used (tho' possibly not much the worse), or those that might have been laid by, and might not be agreeable to the pattern here, the Lords Justices did think that though great abatement were made in the price, and consequently they might not be an ill bargain for the public, yet, in the present circumstances, and to avoid any disagreeable incident in an affair of this nature, it would be most advisable not to have them. As to the proposal that some of the arms which had long lain by or been repaired might do for the Irish militia, the Government had lately sold 5,000 first-rate muskets to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland for that purpose, and they had found the Irish Executive so exacting, that they refused to take over others from the Tower, which, though of very good quality, were a little short in the barrel, and therefore their Lordships apprehended that these from Hanover would not be thought fit for that service."[1]

Lord Waldegrave apprised the Government of naval preparations going forward at Brest and Toulon, the precise object of which he was unable to extract from the French Ministers. Cardinal Fleury told him that "so long as we did not make ourselves masters of the Spanish Possessions in the West Indies, and did not seek to keep them for our own, he had nothing to say; but if we did, as such a step could not but be a great detriment

[1] To Harrington, June, 1740.—*MS.*

to France, and curb her trade in the tropics, she should be forced to take part in the war."[1] This language was not regarded as so decided that any of the undertakings in readiness ought to be suspended, or any of the instructions prepared for Lord Cathcart altered, or those for Norris, who had fifteen men-of-war ready for sea. To this resolution Walpole, Hardwicke, Sir Charles Wager, Lord President, and Newcastle were parties. But the Ambassador, unable to give the assurance that permanent conquests at the expense of Spain were not possible, gave up at last regretfully the policy he had so long maintained. The war party became ascendant at Versailles; and orders were despatched to the frigates and line-of-battle ships cruising off various coasts of the Mediterranean, to rendezvous in August at Malaga, where their pennants were to be mingled once more with those of a Bourbon power. Waldegrave was not easily convinced of the fact, or what it implied, and he was allowed to remain at Paris some weeks longer; but the English alliance was atan end.[2]

On the King's return from Hanover in October, Sir Robert took care to have the first audience, and to impart his own version of the state of affairs. Some days later, when the Secretary was alone with his Majesty, he reported what had passed the night before about a despatch to Vienna, pressing for closer alliance, with which he was much pleased. The King, in a set speech, said that "he did not value the Opposition in Parliament if all those in his service acted together and were united, but if they thwarted one another, and created dissensions in the carrying on of public business, then indeed it would be another case." The Duke easily saw from whom this came, for Sir Robert had been with the King nearly an hour, and had come out in high spirits and humour. He answered that to be sure all his servants would unite in doing the best service they could. Finding Sir Robert in the outer room, he said he had found the King quite altered from the day before, and that he had made a pretty extraordinary speech to them; which he repeated, saying that he had heard this language often before. Sir Robert replied, "I know you mean from me"; which he did, for he could almost swear to the words. "However agreeable to my own way of thinking," said Walpole, "or true in itself, I have said nothing

[1] Newcastle to Harrington, 4th July, 1740.—*MS.*

[2] Richmond to Newcastle, 19th September, 1740.—*MS.*

now to the King to that purpose." Newcastle then said: 'When measures are agreed amongst us, it is very right that everybody should support them; but not to have the liberty of giving one's opinion before they are agreed, is very wrong." He said shortly, "What do you mean? This war is yours. You have had the conduct of it." Newcastle contented himself with denying this fact, and so they parted.

Commenting on the foregoing, the Duke asked Hardwicke "whether it was possible that business could go on, when what was agreed amongst them was often equally overhauled afterwards, both by Lord H. and Sir R., if it was not quite agreeable to their own inclinations, and when they had reason to fear that their united credit with his Majesty might not prove sufficient to induce him to do quite right in this great conjuncture. One would govern all, and fill the King's head with complaints and unreasonable jealousies of part of his servants."[1]

[1] Newcastle to Hardwicke, 25th October, 1740.—*MS.*

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FALL OF WALPOLE.

1741.

Opposition Calling for Naval Victories—Debates on Foreign Affairs—Walpole Defends his Policy—Shippen Requites a Service—Bolingbroke in France—Walpole Clings to Ascendancy—General Election—Pecuniary Shortcomings—Courting the Lord of Petworth—Wager Returned for Westminster—The Grenvilles and Pitts—The Cabinet Despond—Newcastle's Success in Elections—The Pelhams at their Zenith—Treachery of Newcastle—Ministers Lose Ground—Walpole Defeated—Reluctant to Retire—Reconstruction of the Cabinet.

HAVING forced the Government into war, Opposition were importunate in demanding victories, or the disclosure of the causes why there were none. Motion after motion was made in Parliament disparaging the conduct of Administration in not having sent an army to support Vernon in the conquest of Spanish America. Everyone was proud of his success at Portobello, but why had not Carthagena been taken? Instructions from the Admiralty ought to be produced, and the cautionary missives from the Secretary of State, like those which had paralysed Hosier when, with a larger squadron, he might have achieved greater success. The chief assailants were Argyll, Carteret, Bathurst, and Chesterfield, in the Lords; and Pulteney, Sandys, Lord Gage, and Waller, in the Commons; but every division endorsed the Ministerial draft on public confidence, and after the Christmas recess it was still doubtful to outsiders whether the stability of the Cabinet was really shaken. To its Members their prospects were less assured, for disunion more than ever reigned amongst them, and the temper of the Dictator was become more peremptory and his will more absolute.

Motions of directly-applied censure were still defeated, but by

diminishing numbers ; fresh votes were scarce at St. Stephen s and the device was once more resorted to of keeping legal preferments open with the unacknowledged aim of influencing wavering competitors in the House of Commons, or their immediate relatives. A vacancy had for some time existed on the judicial Bench, which Hardwicke wished to see filled up prior to the spring circuit. Two of the judges were disqualified by ill health, and in their stead serjeants-at-law, not over-laden with practice, were glad to be sent. The Chancellor thought it would be objectionable to name a third *locum tenens* of the same class, but Walpole had no qualms on the subject, and thought the empty place more useful than the most unexceptionable appointment. The tone of Hardwicke's expostulation in writing betrays a lack of his usual command of courtesy, strongly indicative of the growing differences in the Cabinet.[1]

In his conduct of the war the Minister was accused of being as thriftless as he was unthriving. His belief in his indispensability, perhaps unconsciously, grew upon him, and his habit of indulgence and expense kept pace with his indifference of opinion. Opposition gained strength, and at the beginning of 1741 the dissatisfied Whigs concerted with the more eager Tories an attempt to take the Treasury by storm. The leaders of the separate sections came at last to see that without previous concert and engagement to lend mutual help they could effect nothing. The attempt of Argyll to snatch the Leadership in attack, provoking as it had done a conspiracy of silence, and ending in utter failure,[2] was a warning too signal to be neglected, and by the time Parliament reassembled it had been resolved at Leicester House that motions for the dismissal of Walpole should be moved simultaneously by Carteret in the one House and Sandys in the other, which it was expected that patriots of every hue would support.

A dining club of opposition met every Tuesday during the Session at the King's Arms. Five dukes, one marquis, fifteen earls, three viscounts, and three barons, drank to the overthrow of Sir Robert Walpole, and pledged life and fortune in the cause. The appointed day at length arrived,[3] and Carteret

[1] Hardwicke to Walpole, 13th January, 1741.—*MS.*
[2] November, 1740.
[3] 13th Feb., 1741.

spoke for two hours, but without materially affecting votes. He moved an address to the King praying the removal of an usurping autocrat who had betrayed his master into manifold departures from the path of the Constitution. Argyll vehemently dwelt upon the dismissals from the army of men whose loyalty was not impeached, and whose sole offence was that of presuming to differ in Parliament from a despotic Minister. Newcastle professed to regard the Motion as an attack on the whole Administration, cited the case of Lord Strafford, and adjured the House not to set a precedent for cumulating censures on measures in past years which had been at the time approved.

The young Duke of Bedford, who had become an active adherent of the malcontents, indulged in sharp, if not severe comments on the sort of defence made by the Government Hardwicke did not venture to justify (perhaps at heart did not approve) the arbitrary treatment of the Duke of Bolton, Lord Cobham, and Mr. Pitt, but contented himself with specious platitudes about the necessity of the Sovereign having, at all times, absolute discretion over the officers of the army, in which Jacobites or Rebublicans might be found, whom any faithful Minister would advise his Sovereign to remove. The speech of the Chancellor probably went as far in defence of the First Minister as was useful to gain votes; but its arguments were carefully winnowed of everything likely to prove indigestible by a possible successor. Within twelve months the wary occupant of the Woolsack reaped as he had strawed; and when Walpole had ceased to govern remained Keeper of the Seal in a coalition Cabinet. But fifty-nine peers divided with Carteret, while one hundred and eight held fast by the Minister. Wilmington did not vote.

If ever a Minister enjoyed the power and privilege of Premiership in everything but the name, it was Walpole. He had long ceased to relish unqualified or unacknowledged ascendancy; but the sagacity of his selfishness constantly bid him beware of using a new and innovating title. Premiership was not merely a function unknown to the law, undefined in its nature and unwelcome, alike to Cabinet and the Court, as implying more or less assumption or dictation, but it was in his time and long after a theme of jealousy and suspicion to the governing classes in Parliament, whose individual hopes and pretensions it was

looked on as tending to mar. On the rejection of Carteret's Motion, a protest was signed by a number of Peers against the usurpation by anyone of the unconstitutional rank and authority of a Prime Minister; and Hardwicke, who doubtless chuckled at heart at any impediment thrown in the way of superior control by a First Lord of the Treasury, either in being or that might be, over the other great officers of State, took no exception to its being enrolled among the records of the Peers. They protested "because they were persuaded that a sole or even a First Minister was a functionary unknown to the law of Great Britain; inconsistent with the Constitution, and destructive of liberty in any Government whatsoever."

Sandys, in the other House, opened the discussion by urging every topic of diplomatic and military mismanagement, especially that of allowing France to annex Lorraine, and, by implication, imputing every species of corruption in domestic affairs. Wortley Montagu moved that Walpole be ordered to withdraw pending the debate; and when the injustice of this proposition seemed to scandalise many on both sides, Gibbon characteristically suggested as a modification that the Minister should be heard in his own defence and then be ordered to withdraw. But neither would this go down with the more disinterested of his opponents, and the accused Minister hoped he might be allowed to hear all that could be said against him, before he was called upon to speak. The debate was conducted chiefly by men of comparatively little note. Pulteney was answered by Stephen Fox, Wyndham's vacant place was occupied by Pitt. More was expected of him on the occasion than the meagre reports of his speech would lead us to suppose was realised. That which is ascribed to the editorship of Dr. Johnson differs essentially from those delivered on other occasions, and bears indelible marks of the predilection of the venerable grammarian for lofty abstractions and magniloquent forms of expression. It is not easy to comprehend how such a discourse was likely to wean fretful adherents from their hitherto all-powerful leader, or to withhold hostile waverers from deserting.[1] Walpole waited until the eloquence of jealousy and aversion was

[1] The report alluded to appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* after the lapse of many months, and was omitted (probably by desire) in the two volumes of debates published by Johnson.

spent, and then entered upon his defence with all his wonted ability, and in a tone of contemptuous indifference to and supreme confidence in the result, too consistent and unfaltering to have been feigned. Upon all the high-flown professions of sympathy with the people and zeal for the national good he trampled with scorn. Gentlemen had talked a great deal of patriotism—a venerable word; but, he was sorry to say, of late so much hackneyed that it was in danger of falling into disgrace; the very idea of true patriotism was lost, and the term had been prostituted to the worst of purposes. He had never been afraid of making patriots; but he disdained and despised all their efforts. There was not a man amongst them whose particular aim he was not able to ascertain, and from what motive he had entered the lists of Opposition. "My great and principal crime," continued Walpole, "is my long continuance in office, or, in other words, the long exclusion of those who now exclaim against me. This is the heinous offence which exceeds all others: I keep from them the possession of that power, those honours, and those emoluments to which they so ardently and pertinaciously aspire. I will not attempt to deny the reasonableness and necessity of party war; but in carrying on that war all principles and rules of justice should not be departed from. I am called, repeatedly and insidiously, Prime and Sole Minister. Admitting, for sake of argument, that I am, in this country, Prime and Sole Minister, am I therefore Prime and Sole Minister of all Europe? Am I answerable for the conduct of other countries as well as of my own? If my whole administration is to be scrutinised and arraigned, why are the most favourable parts to be omitted? If facts are to be accumulated on one side, why not on the other? Was I not called by the voice of the King and the nation to remedy the fatal effects of the South Sea project, and to support declining credit? Was I not placed at the head of the Treasury when the revenues were in the greatest confusion? Is credit revived, and does it now flourish? Is it not at an incredible height, and if so, to whom must that circumstance be attributed? Has the true interest of the nation been pursued—has trade flourished? Have gentlemen produced one instance of this exorbitant power, of the influence I extend to all parts of the nation, of the tyranny with which I oppress those who oppose, and the liberality with which

I reward those who support me? Is ambition imputed to me? Why, then, do I still continue a commoner—I who refused the white staff and a Peerage? I had, indeed, like to have forgotten the little ornament about my shoulders, which gentlemen have so repeatedly mentioned in terms of sarcastic obloquy, but surely, though this may be regarded with envy or indignation in another place, it cannot be supposed to raise any resentment in this House, where many may be pleased to see those honours which their ancestors have worn, restored again to the Commons. But while I unequivocally deny that I am Sole and Prime Minister, I will not shrink from the responsibility which attaches to the post I have the honour to hold." [1]

Edward Harley, whose vote both sides counted as certain in support of Sandys, surprised and disappointed both. He had opposed Ministers because he thought their measures wrong, and as long as they were he should continue to do so. War was destroying us abroad, and poverty and corruption were devouring us at home. But without convincing evidence, he would not censure any man. A noble relative of his had been impeached and imprisoned, whereby his years had been shortened; and the prosecution had been pressed by the Minister then assailed. He was glad of the opportunity to return good for evil; and to do that justice which had been denied his predecessor. So saying, he and his nephew left the House without voting. Shippen, from a different motive, took a similar course. A Jacobite friend, against whom the Minister was known to have convicting proofs, had been suffered to escape at his personal solicitation, with the remark only that if by any accident their relative positions should be reversed, the obligation would not be forgotten. The contingent which Shippen led, numbering thirty-four, quitted the house with him, and thus materially contributed to swell the majority of 290 to 106, by which the motion was rejected. Nevertheless, the controversy still went on. One of the most protracted and excited discussions was that on a renewed proposal to carry a Bill for the more effectual impressment of seamen, which led to the interchange of invectives and imputations that have long been made familiar to the youth of later days in lesson books of Parliamentary rhetoric. Had stenography been a popular profession, or journalism been the

[1] From his own notes of his speech, "Parlt. Hist.," Vol. II.

cheap luxury of all classes at the time, the denunciations of Sir J. Barnard, Pulteney, and Pitt, would doubtless have had some effect; but the limited attendance and the great preponderance in division of those who supported Government show how little the Admiralty apprehended from the odium which their critics sought to incite against them; and subsequent changes in legislation have so completely raised the condition of the seamen as a class that it would serve little purpose to dwell minutely on the accusations of cruelty and solemn repudiations of the injustice of a happily forgotten state of things. The Bill, after many days' debate, passed the Commons by two to one, the chief reason assigned for it being that France had a powerful navy ready for sea, the destination of which could not be ascertained.

The death of Sir W. Wyndham and of a still more powerful assailant, Alexander Pope, had been followed by the retirement of Bolingbroke in despair to France. Well might the Minister put faith in his star, and indulge in dreams of practical irresponsibility. He suffered the country to drift still deeper into war; and instead of attempting to curb his colleagues in their blind acquiescence in the King's desire to meddle in German politics, with the authority and arms of a first-rate Power, he affected to espouse with zeal the cause of the Queen of Hungary, and led the Commons to vote a subsidy of £300,000 and a contingent of 12,000 German and Danish troops to maintain the integrity of her dominions. By treaty, England was bound to sustain the title of Maria Theresa, and the supplementary Conventions with Denmark and Hesse were confessedly intended to furnish the means of defending Hanover in case the federal fidelity of George II. should endanger that portion of his dominions. It was possibly not foreseen that his loyal adhesion to the cause of the Empress-Queen would draw down upon the Electorate the concentric hostility of France, Prussia, and Muscovy; and the English Government wisely sought to bring about a compromise regarding Silesia, a few places on the confines of which were all that Frederick II. as yet demanded. The Court of Vienna, however, haughtily spurned the proposal of any surrender of territory, and a sanguinary struggle began which soon involved all Christendom in its calamities and crimes.

H. Walpole, tired of his duties as Cofferer, exchanged that

lucrative but temporary post for the less profitable permanent place of Teller of the Exchequer,—not a bad ending after twenty years of political office. Sir Robert felt the shades of evening closing on his long career, and, with brotherly love, wished to provide a secure and agreeable repose for one who had served him so variously and faithfully. While the tide ran strongly against Walpole individually, he appeared unconscious of the perfidy of more than one of those about him, and, sunk in what was truly called at the time "a lethargy of power," used little exertion to baffle their machinations. The Lord President desired his fall in the hope of becoming his successor, as head of a moderate Tory and Whig coalition. His Grace of Newcastle cherished similar hopes for himself, and opened communications to that end with his Grace of Argyll. Lord Islay's proceedings in Scotland did not escape suspicion, to which the event gave colour. Of all this Sir Robert was fully aware; yet he remained almost passive, as though he had grown weary of counterplotting the intrigues of men whom no intimacy or confidence could bind, and whose double dealings he had so long known and despised, that he had ceased to regard them as formidable.

The Septennial term of Parliamentary life having expired, a general election for England and Scotland took place in May, 1741. Neither Triennial nor Septennial Act had been passed by the Colonial Parliament of Ireland, and its occupying lease, like that of arable farms, was for the life of the King. It had long been foreseen that the future fate of Administration would depend upon the constitution of the next House of Commons, and for months beforehand every instrument and device had been employed to make safe doubtful seats, and to gain additional ones. The organisation of coalesced assailants of Government had never been so complete, and the direction of resistance was chiefly left, as formerly, to Newcastle.

Reckless outlay in elections was at length beginning to tell seriously on a large income. His Grace had borrowed £3,000 not very long before, which he supposed he should somehow or other be able to repay; but when called upon for reimbursement no way seemed immediately available but to break up his establishment at Claremont and be content for a while with life in Sussex, where country hospitality would cost less than frequent dinners and festivities *au Prince* at Claremont. His devoted

wife, who was used to accommodate her wishes and tastes implicitly to those of her whimsical lord, could not easily reconcile herself to what was to her banishment from a circle in which she had been brought up, and out of the chime of whose joy bells and gossip she looked upon life as not worth living. "I see nothing in my life to come but what must make me very unhappy if the consequences of this unfortunate affair are to be what you tell me. The natural consequence will be living in Sussex. You know how little you will have to support your way of living. Here is a fresh debt of £3,000, which cannot be paid off but by saving it out of your income, which will then be a small one to save it out of, and added to this the elections coming on, which you know will be a heavy expense. So that two years hence, I fear, instead of having paid this three thousand the debt will be much increased, and no possibility of paying it. You know the way of life must be always disagreeable to me, but if that were all that were to happen to me from being there I would endeavour, at least, not to let you know how unhappy it made me, but one thing more sits heavy upon me—the leaving my sister[1]."[2]

Claremont, however, was not shut up, and the steward was left to arrange as best he could with the tradesmen without clearing up accounts with his irritable employer. Things naturally went on from bad to worse, till in April, 1740, they had reached the vulgar condition, unsuspected by the world at large, of being unable to get ordinary credit. "One Cole, a very honest man, who furnishes me with hay, writes that he must never expect the money, and looks upon it as lost. How is it possible for a man in his senses to say so? Sure, there must be some mistake. The Kingston butcher has refused to serve us, and the labourers at Claremont, though inconsiderable, have not been paid these three months. I wish you would send for Mr. Waller on Tuesday, talk everything over with him, and see how things stand. As my business will really not allow me to look into these things, I must beg you would do it for me, and keep Mr. Waller constantly to the business, and make him come to you once a week."[3]

[1] Mary, afterwards Duchess of Leeds.

[2] Duchess of Newcastle to her husband, 4th Sept., 1739.—*MS.*

[3] Newcastle to his wife, 27th April, 1740.—*MS.*

The indefatigable Comptroller-General of Seats devoted himself once more to the repair and renewal of the collateral influences that made what was called his interest irresistible. To the innumerable seekers for places he became more than ever bountiful, to the dealers in jobs more than ever gracious, to the lookers to advancement in the Church or the army more than every encouraging, and to members of his own order deferential to a degree that was not his wont. *Primus inter pares* among these was the Lord of Petworth, to whom he disclaimed all pretensions of equality and of the possibility of any adequate requital for his favour, but who was open to that which Newcastle had to give without stint, and which at election times cost him not a penny to offer. To the Duke of Somerset he professed "how highly sensible he was of his Grace's great goodness in honouring him and his brother in so distinguished a manner with his countenance and protection. His Grace knew how extraordinarily and how personally his friends and relations were attacked at the last election, not only in the county, but in boroughs where his family had been constantly chosen, before the memory of anybody then alive. He was always sorry when he had the misfortune to differ with his Grace in anything, and should ever retain the most grateful sense of his Grace's continued goodness and favour to him and to his family."[1]

The first notable contest was at Westminster. The fame of Vernon was at the zenith, and with the Admiral was named on the popular side Mr. Edwin, husband of one of the ladies-in-waiting to the Princess of Wales. Most of the electors were in the habit of voting for whomsoever Government brought forward, and Sir Charles Wager, it was believed, was popular enough to carry along with him a Lord of the Treasury without talent or repute. Large sums were subscribed, it was said, by the Prince, Mr. Pulteney, and the old Duchess of Marlborough, and Mr. Glover, Chairman of the Local Committee, afterwards confessed that £12,000 had been expended on the contest.[2] But old habits were too strong to be suddenly broken, and the Treasury Whips confidently spoke of the Royal city of Westminster as an electoral curtilage of Whitehall. Nor did the voting undeceive them, and both the official candidates would have been duly returned had

[1] Newcastle to Somerset, 2nd Aug., 1740.—*MS.*

[2] Posthumous Memoirs.

not Lord Sundon, in a fright at some casual outburst of the mob, sent for the Guards and made the High Bailiff close the poll, while they surrounded the hustings. This reckless violation of law and usage secured for the moment the disputed seats; but it turned the tide of fortune throughout the Kingdom, and the author of *Leonidas* indeed lost his own election, but Vernon was returned for Ipswich some days later; and in numerous places the polls were obviously affected by the use made of the incident. The Sussex boroughs were for the most part strictly preserved. Thomas Pelham, of Stanmer, had sat many years for Lewes with his relation Thomas Pelham, of Crowhurst, and the former having died not long before, Mr. Trevor, of Glynde, as his Parliamentary executor, took over his pledges and liabilities as assets. The senior Member reported to his chief how he had given a large entertainment to their friends the electors. He "talked to them each separately, and most of them said their demands were satisfied." They would all vote for Trevor and him. Sergison made great offers to the voters, and kept open-house, which put them to "a great deal of trouble and expense to keep old friends steady." But having been, as he said, the least of the family benefited by a long possession of office, he thought the occasion suitable for obtaining reimbursal of certain liabilities he had incurred years before. In 1720 he paid his Grace £6,000 for 2,000 £3 subscriptions. It was certainly a South Sea bargain, but of a particular sort, and such as the Duke would, upon the fall, have recouped to any other person. The interest had doubled the sum, and it had indeed since been nearly doubled upon him the contrary way by his great expenses at Newark. He observed, too, that he was the only one that his Grace had allowed to spend his own money at any of his towns; his small estate was now mortgaged for the sum, and if he was out of all employment he would not have £50 a-year to live upon at the latter end of his days. This was the only time at which he could represent his case with any prospect of being relieved. It would be a very trifle compared with the grand affair depending, though of the utmost importance in keeping up the only branch of the family that could ever want support, and here he rested it. The contest at Lewes ended: Pelham 156, Trevor 154, Sergison 117.

Beside patronage of all kinds and pressure more or less in-

direct, numerous applications were made to the Secretary of State for money, indispensable to keep the poorer voters until the day of poll. £100 at a time was wanted for this purpose, sometimes by Thomas Pelham and sometimes by other trusty Members of the same stamp. The returns periodically made by them to their chief show that the number of voters in the Sussex and Surrey boroughs was very limited.

The Cinque Ports were reserved for particular friends and favourites. Hastings was directed to return James Pelham, a near relative of the Duke, and Andrew Stone, his private secretary, who next year was given the sinecure post of Secretary of Barbadoes, the duties of which were performed by deputy. Dover, in like manner, sent Lord George Sackville and Thomas Revell, at the desire of the Lord Steward. Rye furnished seats for Phillips Gybbon, who became Lord of the Treasury, and Sir John Norris. Sandwich had for its representatives Sir George Oxenden, a name familiar at the Board of Treasury, and John Pratt. Seaford returned Sir William Gage and W. Hay, both active members of the ducal organisation in Sussex. Winchelsea was honoured by the nomination of Lord Doneraile and T. Orby Hunter. New Romney alone was beguiled by the managers of the Opposition into returning Sir Francis Dashwood and Mr. Furnese, a friend of Lord Chesterfield's. In Yorkshire the course of affairs went smoothly. The Duke's four nominees were returned without show of opposition for Aldborough and Boroughbridge—Tyrrell, Gregory, Jewkes, and Wilkinson.[1] It was not a time to be nice. Finch and Townshend stood for the University of Cambridge, and the Secretary of State addressed a personal request to the Master of St. John's, Peter House, Christ College, and others on their behalf,[2] and they were returned. In the following year Finch was made Groom of the Bedchamber.

Lord Falmouth undertook to carry several of the Cornish boroughs. Dodington, who had linked his fortunes with those of Argyll, promised to secure Melcombe and Weymouth, and his Grace made certain of being able to turn the Scotch Members, for whose fidelity his brother Islay was still held accountable.

Dodington's support, which amounted to more than half-a-

[1] From Boroughbridge, 29th April, 1741.—*MS.*
[2] From Newcastle, 25th April, 1741.—*MS.*

dozen votes, had been rewarded by Walpole with a seat at the Treasury; but being suspected of holding secret communications with the enemy he was summarily dismissed, and thenceforth he joined in active opposition. His nominees at Weymouth and Melcombe, Poole, Winchilsea, Wells, and Bridgewater received orders to change sides, and they contributed accordingly to the final issue of the struggle.

From the marriage of Walpole's son with the daughter of Sir S. Rolle, one of the nominations for Callington was added to those of the Minister, and Horace Walpole the younger was returned as junior Member for the borough during his absence abroad with Coplestone, a staunch supporter of Government. Strenuous efforts were made by the coalesced Opposition to win seats from the Ministerialists, and under the management of Thomas Pitt they mustered in formidable array when Parliament met. Richard Grenville kept his seat for Bucks, his brother George for the county town; George Lyttelton and Thomas Pitt for Oakhampton; John Pitt and Henry Drax for Wareham; William Pitt and James Grenville for Old Sarum; George Moreton, Pitt, and Lord Galway for Pontefract. The general battle over, Newcastle sat down to count losses and gains. The loss of rank and file to Administration was palpable and great, though not so definable as party writers chose to name —not so measurable as anybody could tell who did not know how it had been individually got, kept or lost.

Thomas Pelham had £300 from his colleague, Mr. Trevor, of Glynde, for his share of election expenses remaining unpaid at Lewes, and the same sum from Newcastle for his proportion.[1] But everywhere this wholesale business more and more involved serious outlay, without definite prospect of reimbursal.

Vernon was said to have inflicted a severe blow on the Spaniards at Carthagena, reducing its fortifications to ruins; but renewing the bombardment of the town immediately after, the attack was made a dear purchase by the havoc of our best men.[2] The victory was gazetted and glorified, and wherever country elections had still to be fought bonfires blazed.

By the middle of June the failure of Vernon to realise the results of which Government had prematurely boasted caused

[1] T. Pelham, from Lewes, 4th July, 1741.—*MS.*

[2] Capt. Jackson on board the Fleet, to Mr. Corbiere; from Jamaica, 30th May 1741.—*MS.*

much chagrin. To Harrington, at Göhrdt, his colleagues affected no disguise. They were all under the greatest concern at the melancholy news from the West Indies. The loss of so many brave men, the disappointment after they had published their anticipations over all Europe touched everyone who had the least concern for the honour of the King and the nation, and, he was afraid, would be felt in their operations and negotiations abroad. To what it was owing he would not pretend to judge. His own opinion was that the war in America must be supported, or they would lose all their credit and reputation, and be for ever after at the mercy of Spain in the West Indies, and this could not be done without a great reinforcement of land forces, well provided with ordnance and other necessaries, and a proper convoy to go with them. He saw the difficulty and hazard of such an expedition, but the necessity of it.[1] The Chancellor learned the ill news with dismay. He never found himself so much affected with any misfortune. Though he had had some misgivings from what appeared in the first letters of Vernon and Wentworth, yet he wished they had reserved their messengers of success till they had seen further into the event. He was glad that they were agreed that America was not to be given up, and that they must go on with their measures there, otherwise they must give up their plantations and trade. This would require all possible attention, deliberation, and prudence, and all possible temper and union too, amidst the chagrin and ill-humour which such ill success naturally raised. He was sure to be at the next meeting of Cabinet at Chelsea, for he would not contribute the least to Tuesday's passing without some material resolution being taken.[2]

The King had requested that Walpole, Newcastle, Wilmington, and he should specially confer, and let him know their opinion how the exigency should be met. Hardwicke, knowing the tension existing between the Secretary and the First Lord, advised the former to write a conciliatory note to Sir Robert, which he did, in well-meant but strangely awkward terms. "It would be very improper in them to have their consideration interrupted by an improper behaviour towards each other. He was, therefore, determined for his own part to lay aside all warmth or personal

[1] To Harrington, 20th June, 1741.—*MS.*

[2] To Newcastle, from Wimpole, 20th June, 1741.—*MS.*

considerations, to proceed to the business with as much coolness and deliberation as he was capable of, and a resolution to hear the opinion of those whom he was to consult with, with candour and deference, and when he had the misfortune to differ, to do it in such a manner as might be best for the King's service."[1]

Richmond was "vext to a degree he could not express by their misfortunes in the West Indies. He was sorry to find that Vernon and all there threw the blame on Wentworth. If he was not well with Vernon, he should be recalled, and some good officer sent in his place that was fit to command. Six regiments should be sent at once to reinforce them, two of which should be old corps from Ireland with good officers, to be replaced by those now raising. The nation was undone if they did not repair this misfortune by giving a great stroke in the West Indies. Newcastle might say to him, 'Why don't you come up and give your opinion at Whitehall?' but he saw how little weight his opinion had at that board. It was bad the officers abroad should have disputes, but disputes amongst the Ministers at home would be fatal to the Government, which had stopped his mouth upon several occasions. He need say no more, for the Secretary knew his meaning, and no mortal living but himself knew his sentiments."[2]

The Duke never was so loth to write on public affairs which had in them no spice of comfort from any quarter; but he told Harrington (obviously for his Majesty's ear) that Wentworth must be superseded, and a resolute effort made to retrieve his blunders. As he was for going on, he was for doing it effectually by sending four regiments thither with officers of experience and service. "We shall be the least of men, disgraced in the eyes of both friends and foes, submitting our commercial interests in that part of the world to the arrogance and resentment of a merciless and provoked enemy, if we do not make one more attempt."[3]

How needful for his purpose it seemed to give George II. the notion that the minority in the Cabinet were the true sticklers for honour, is constantly observable in the correspondence of this period. George II. had no ear for music and no taste for ex-

[1] Newcastle Correspondence.—*MS.*

[2] Richmond to Newcastle, 21st June, 1741.—*MS.*

[3] 14th July, 1741.—*MS.*

travagance, but he delighted in the rattling of the scabbard in peace, and the diapason of artillery as often as it could be heard in war: and if these things were costly, that was Parliament's affair, not his. If the defencelessness of Hanover had led him to bargain for its neutrality just then between the combatants on the Rhine, all the more desirous he would naturally be of a right policy in the West Indies. This was just the sort of insight into motives of which Newcastle was capable. On the other hand, his infirm colleague at Herrenhausen was like Issachar of old, "between two burthens." Walpole loaded him with reasons and suggestions of one kind and the Secretary of State with their antidotes upon the other. How much of either he communicated to the King nobody could tell; but the foolish vehemence of the latter in deprecating and actually denouncing the Hanover Treaty, helped only to confirm the Sovereign in his reliance on the magician of the Treasury, with whom he dare not dispense. While a confidential despatch from the Duke was on its way to Harrington, a still more secret and confidential letter from the King to Walpole crossed it.

By the end of September the aspect of affairs had not improved. The despatches were sent in circulation to Wilmington, and his only comment on them was conveyed in an elderly whine over "the melancholy and distracted state of affairs abroad, which appeared to him quite desperate."[1]

Meanwhile Newcastle chuckled over the unthinned muster-roll of the contingent under his personal command, and scrutinised again and again the incidents and causes of defeat elsewhere. But it was not in his nature to grieve inconsolably at a total diminution of force that virtually enhanced beyond expectation his personal power. The Pelham votes, always numerous, had, by careful culture, grown to be conclusive. Henceforth they were indispensable to Whig possession of office. The days of his submission in the Cabinet to the rude and overbearing dictation of Walpole were at an end. He could now afford to be independent, obdurate, unpersuadable, patriotic, if he chose. He had made Hardwicke, Richmond, Harrington, and Henry Pelham what they officially were; and they had vowed, times without number, that they would live and die with him, and his credulous egotism really believed it. He had a

[1] To Newcastle from Eastbourne, 30th September, 1741.—*MS.*

long account of unforgotten snubbings and mortifications to settle with the great usurper of authority, as he had come to regard Sir Robert; but he must still bide his time and wait for events. They were not long coming. The King at Hanover daily grew more uneasy at the consequences of the recent treaty with the Empress-Queen. When the pledges given by England became known at Versailles and Potsdam, resolutions were taken of co-operation in Germany which plainly menaced the integrity of the Electorate; and when a French army of 40,000 men, under Marshal Mallebois, entered Westphalia, George II. began to tremble for the safety of his ancestral Duchy. Harrington, without consulting his colleagues at home, consented to negotiate a secret treaty with the French, whereby his Majesty covenanted not to oppose their advance in Germany nor continue the march of his succours to Maria Theresa. He also engaged not to oppose the elevation of the Elector of Bavaria to the Imperial Throne, on condition that Hanover should be regarded as neutralised.

There were many disputes at the Cockpit about what should be done.

To guard against the way in which altercations might be reported to Hanover, the Duke wrote: "They had it under consideration whether they should send for the King home or not, but it was thought they had not yet a sufficient handle for it, and that, under the circumstances, his Majesty would not come, and be displeased with their recommending it. Everybody was truly concerned for the distress things were in at Hanover, and heartily wished they could do more to help it to an end than they possibly could. For himself, he might differ from those he loved and esteemed, but must give his opinion according to his conscience. He saw Europe almost swallowed up by France, and he would do anything he could that might possibly tend to save it; and if that could not be, he would at least put it out of the power of the most willing, and perhaps the most blameable, ever to reproach them."[1] A private letter from the King, announcing the conclusion of the Treaty of Neutralisation, was received by Sir Robert in presence of Newcastle, without its contents being communicated to his Grace, and a reluctant acquiescence having been accorded by the First Lord, the treaty was actually con-

[1] Newcastle to Harrington.—*MS.*

cluded, and transmitted in copy for the approval of the Cabinet before the Duke was acquainted with its contents. He thereupon denounced the transaction as dishonourable to England and the allies, and protested against the secrecy of the negotiation in terms which his brother thought intemperate and disrespectful. Pelham wrote[1] to soothe his irritation by pointing out that in the critical situation of the Elector no other course was open to him. He had gone over the despatches at Houghton with Walpole, and was obliged to own that he felt the House of Hanover had been deserted by all the other Powers of Europe; and he hoped, therefore, that something might be struck out to secure the Low Countries at least from invasion. He was no partisan of Harrington, but he did not regard his conduct or language as deserving the reproaches heaped upon him. "We[2] may, by a nearer access to the King than others, know his weakness, and be sorry to see them take such hold of him as frequently to obstruct the good intentions of his servants; but in conscience it cannot be said, whatever his private views, that in this great affair to all Europe he had omitted anything in his power to keep the natural friends of the Queen of Hungary together; and he had, undoubtedly, supported her as far as prudence would permit him, with more than his own contingent. I dare say when you consider these things coolly and without prejudice you will think so too; if not, you will at least think it prudent not to talk otherwise." But the Duke was not to be appeased; the strongest expressions of indignation were repeated in a letter to the Chancellor,[3] who was expected to side with him in resistance, and a counter scheme of policy which he had begun to form. His Grace proposed that Ministers should transmit a strong remonstrance to Hanover, representing the unpopularity and impolicy of the measure, and requesting its reconsideration. He even proposed that the Cabinet should make an appeal to every Court in Europe, declaring that, as King of England, his Majesty would adhere to the engagement contracted with Maria Theresa in 1731, and use his best efforts to maintain the liberties of Europe in concert with those Powers that should be disposed to support Austria. "If something of this kind were not speedily

[1] From Wolterton, 13th Sept., 1741.
[2] Of the Cabinet.
[3] 18th September, 1741.

done, the Electoral neutrality would be, to all intents and purposes, a Royal neutrality; and the English Ministers who acquiesced in the one would thus make themselves authors of the other; and the Lord have mercy upon them." This was plainly to impose a collective censure on Walpole, and hardly less directly upon the Sovereign. Neither the Chancellor nor Henry Pelham gave the suggestion any support. Yet he persisted in Cabinet, though alone, in urging the proposal; and when formally rejected tried to persuade himself and others that it was his duty to resign. "When I reflect seriously upon the present system of administration and public affairs, I cannot but be of opinion that it is very improper for me to remain in business. I am afraid it is certain that there is no one in the active part of the Ministry that has either any confidence at present in me or I in him, except my Lord Chancellor. I must own I think the King's unjustifiable partiality for Hanover, to which he makes all other views and considerations subservient, has manifested itself so much that no man can continue in the active part of the Administration with honour and satisfaction to himself, for he must either own himself a cypher or be thought to have advised and concurred in measures which are both dishonourable and fatal to the interest of Europe. If all would agree to remonstrate like men against these measures on the King's return, something might yet be done, but this cannot be expected. If ever man was drove out of an Administration for measures, and I may say measures only, I am, if I go out now." But he was willing to go into the country, though it would be disagreeable to him, rather than remain at Court or go into Opposition.[1] His brother, who understood him better than he understood himself, comprehended how unlikely he was to resign after all; and that what he really was in want of was an excuse for sitting still. He differed with him frankly but fraternally about his motives. He was convinced that they proceeded from a dislike to *both persons and things*. The partiality to Hanover in general was what all men in business had found great obstruction from ever since this family had been upon the Throne; and, indeed, upon Newcastle's principle, no man that ever served them could preserve his integrity. All they had to do was to secrete their weaknesses, and if not called upon to sanction their indiscretions, he did not see how the

[1] Newcastle to Pelham, 2nd October, 1741.

honour of the most scrupulous Minister could be called in question. He fancied that if he went out he need not go into Opposition, but before next Session was over he would be as declared an opponent as Carteret or Pulteney. They professed what he really thought, and when he was out would tell him they meant the same things, and would act for a time in subservience to him, until it would be difficult for him to separate from them. Owing everything to the Duke, he must, of course, go out with him, though differing altogether from him on the reasons for that step; but he honestly thought the necessity very hard. If his objections centred in the conduct of the office he then filled, why should his Grace not take another place, look on, say nothing, and be content? If his objections went further, there was nothing, in his opinion, could remove that but what was not improbable a few days ago, and might probably happen in the course of nature very soon.[1]

Walpole understood the good offices thus rendered by his favourite pupil in office, and when the time came he did not forget to requite them. It is hardly necessary to say that the Duke, having thus vainly endeavoured to put Walpole in a minority of one in the Cabinet, and having instead only contrived to place himself there, saw the necessity of waiting for another opportunity to achieve the predominance he had set his heart upon.

When Sir Robert began to feel himself losing his hold of power he bethought him of reviving the design respecting a severance of the union with Hanover which Chancellor Parker had dissuaded George I. from initiating, but which had at intervals been recurred to by the Opposition from time to time as a desirable way of getting rid of the financial drain for Hanoverian troops. George II. is said to have cherished the possibility to spite his son. May he not have come in his old age to feel sometimes that the Electorate was a source of weakness and danger rather than of strength or credit; and that his island realm would, on the whole, be better worth having without it? Be this as it may, Speaker Onslow tells us that a little before Sir Robert's fall he took him aside one day, and said, "What will you say, Speaker, if this hand of mine should bring a message from the King to the House of Commons declaring his consent to having any of his family, after his death, incapable of inheriting the Crown and

[1] Probably alluding to an illness of Sir Robert.—Coxe's "Memoirs of Pelham."

possessing the Electorate at the same time?" Onslow replied that "It would be received as a message from Heaven." He rejoined that it would probably be done; but it was not done, because, in his belief, it would have been opposed by many who formerly were clamouring for it.[1] Another project was that of a mixed Ministry, which would afford Walpole and his brother a golden bridge to go over with their adherents. He told Sandys that perhaps his opponents "might get the better of him, but he was sure no other Minister would ever be able to stand so long as he had done—twenty years"; to which Sandys replied, "he hoped he never should." The final struggle began in December. In the Lords Ministers had a great majority on the Address. In the Commons an amendment to the Address was agreed to, implying a reproach for the misconduct of the war. An attempt to elect Gyles Earle Chairman of Committees failed, and a majority of 242 against 238 preferred Dr. Lee.

Baffled in his favourite schemes of finance and foreign policy, Walpole had grown indolent and more than ever unbelieving. Save Carteret and Pulteney, the competitors of his prime stirred his self-love no more. Harley, Sunderland, Halifax, Townshend, Wyndham, were dead, and Bolingbroke was gone to end his days abroad. Sir Robert had, indeed, his six Dukes in the Cabinet, but he knew how little most of them could do for him in the day of need. Bodily pain oftener tempted him to shirk the drudgery of correspondence and the fret of altercation with peevish colleagues, whom he knew to be unstable or suspected to be insincere. He had bought so many majorities that he could not imagine another was not to be had at a price. He relapsed into apathy. But his table was amply spread, and wine and wantonness still made merry numerous guests. The political vigour of the man observably declined, and weariness stole over him. His hold of power was abandoned: habit had made it second nature, and to the end he continued to dispose of patronage for the benefit of his many friends and relatives. But his zest for ascending flagged. Desire had failed, though the mourners did not yet go about the streets.

Small majorities permitted the Ministerialists for Heydon and Bossiney to retain their seats; but on a petition the election for Westminster was declared void by a majority of four, and Sir

[1] Note to Burnet, Hist., IV., 502.

Charles Wager and Lord Sundon did not stand again. It was on this occasion that the suasive voice of Murray was for the first time heard. Even opponents joined in the cheers which greeted the matchless advocate, and the bitterest critic amongst them owned that he spoke divinely.[1]

During the Christmas recess Lord Perceval and Mr. Edwin were returned for Westminster without a contest, no Ministerialists caring to oppose them. Popular feeling ran so high against the tenacious occupants of power, Chesterfield boasted to Lord Lovell,[2] that Opposition "could have returned two broomsticks." "So I see," was the staunch old Whig's reply.[3] The town was ablaze with bonfires, and the electors were glad of an opportunity to break a yoke of which they had grown ashamed. Mr. Edwin was a dull and docile man whom old Horace Walpole, punning on his colleague's name, called Mr. Perceive-nothing.

Often disputed elections were ruled in favour of Government by narrow majorities, but Ministerialists lost heart and withdrew their petitions, when those in sympathy with Opposition pressed their claims.

It was common for the House to sit throughout the night, and the bodily and mental vigour of the Minister, which never seemed to fail, kept alive the spirit of his followers, as much as it provoked the spleen of those who sought his overthrow. The latter was indeed accused of trying to wear him out by unintermittent conflict; and loud complaint was made of an attempt by Pulteney to induce the House to sit on Saturday, when Sir Robert was accustomed to rest or take the air. His son Horace, writing from amid the scenes of tergiversation and intrigue by which the fate of parties was swayed, describes with cynical candour the meanness of the motives by which the waverers and trimmers were impelled. An untimely refusal by the Duke of Newcastle had alienated one, and the natural instinct of ingratitude for a special service rendered by Sir Robert another. Sir Thomas Lowther, though brought down to vote by his nephew, Lord Hartington, voted in his teeth notwithstanding; and Lord Doneraile, to avert a petition against his return, suddenly went over to the other side. But twenty years of power made the

[1] H. Walpole to Sir H. Mann, 24th Dec., 1741.
[2] Thomas Coke, created 1728 Baron Lovel, and in 1744 Earl of Leicester.
[3] H. Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, January 7th, 1742.

Dictator still incredulous of deposition, and the adjournment for the Christmas holidays gave him three weeks' respite. "Both sides spent the interval trafficking deeply in votes." Government counted on having a preponderance of twenty-six. "Sir Robert says more; but now upon a pinch he brags like any bridegroom."[1] Among the shufflers of the time was Lord Hervey, whose character and countenance have been preserved by a few strokes of the caricaturist's pen. "He is too ill to go to operas; yet with a coffin-face, is as full of his little dirty politics as ever. He will not be well enough to go to the House till the majority is certain somewhere, but he lives shut up with Lord Chesterfield and Mr. Pulteney, a triumvirate who hate one another more than anybody else they could proscribe, had they the power."

Pulteney's motion for a secret committee of twenty-one to inquire into the conduct of Administration was defeated by 253 to 250,—extraordinary numbers in the House as then constituted. "It was a most shocking sight," says Horace Walpole, "to see the sick and dead brought in on both sides! Men on crutches, and Sir William Gordon from his bed, with a blister on his head, and flannel hanging out from under his wig. I could scarce pity him for his ingratitude. The day before the Westminster petition Sir Charles Wager gave his son a ship, and the next day the father came down and voted against him. However, as we have our good-natured men too on our side, one of his own countrymen went and told him in the Lobby that his son was dead. The old man, who looked like Lazarus, bore it with great resolution, and said he knew why he was told of it, but when he thought his country in danger he would not go away."[2] The return of Mr. Turner for Yorkshire after a severe contest, raised for a moment the spirits of the Ministerialists.[3]

It is a highly significant fact that Walpole's Administration was finally overthrown upon no question of public policy or principle, but by a succession of defeats each more telling than the last, upon the most scandalous of all controversies, namely, that arising out of election petitions.

Schemes of Parliamentary reform had already been broached in the Press; and one or two prominent Members affected to

[1] H. Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, 7th January, 1742.
[2] Horace Walpole to Sir H. Mann, 22nd January, 1742.
[3] Newcastle to the Duchess, 23rd January, 1742.

lend their countenance in a certain vague and patronising way. Nothing, however, it was supposed, could be done, till the great Father of Corruption was displaced and brought to justice; and if this consummation could be secured by the winning of battles for seats at St. Stephen's, who, at such a crisis, would waste words in nice objections? One after another, therefore, these contests proceeded with varying success, until at length on the 28th of January, Government was left on the Chippenham petition in a minority of one. The wavering balance of votes on a scrutiny was determined by the desertion of half a score nominal supporters of the Minister, who had not courage to vote either way.[1] The spell of domination was dissolved, and on a final effort to retrieve their defeat on the 2nd of February, it was confirmed by a majority of sixteen. Walpole clung to office even yet, though the talisman had fallen from his hand; but all who had access to him counselled retirement, his brother and his sons being among the most earnest of those who thus advised. He had hitherto kept up his spirits tolerably well, but it was perceived that he was now uneasy, and, indeed, he had very good reason to be so.[2]

Except Admiral Wager, none of his Cabinet colleagues showed any disposition to resign. Many of them rejoiced at heart as much at the prospect of being rid of the despot as his open foes. For some time schemes had been afoot for reconstituting the Administration without him. Writing to Devonshire, the staunchest and most powerful of his supporters, he said "the panic was so great among his own friends that they all declared his retiring had become absolutely necessary as the only means to carry the public business with honour and success."[3] When at length he was persuaded to give up, the King, though hardly taken by surprise, was deeply moved. No Minister since the time of Elizabeth had filled so great a place so long, or rendered such undoubted services to the Monarchy. He had often thwarted George II. in personal objects, and he had not failed to hold him back, sometimes with a rough hand, from folly and injustice; but his fidelity had never been mistaken, and in administrative ability he had certainly proved himself to be without an

[1] Hartington to Devonshire, 30th January, 1742.—*MS.*
[2] *Ibid.*, 2nd February, 1742.—*MS.*
[3] Devonshire *MS.*, 2nd February, 1742.

equal. But the current of recent events had swollen to such a tide that resistance was evidently no longer possible. Not all the flattery and promised complaisance of Sir Robert's enemies could blind the King to the greatness of his loss, and, falling on his neck, he wept bitterly.

Charles Pratt, one of the majority, writing a day or two after the event, confesses the prevalent doubt in which it had left the outer world as to the result among the actual players of the game. "The last division put an end to Sir Robert's reign and glory, for he next day left the House of Commons, gave up the cause, and resigned all his plans. So that I am complimented by many persons as having assisted in giving the last fatal blow to this great man,—a compliment which I don't desire the credit of, but am content with the honour of having served my clients faithfully. I daresay you imagine that we in town know all that is to happen upon this great change, and expect to hear from me a complete list of the new Ministers, and the future plan of their measures. The town is full of this discourse, and every man has already settled the Government as he wishes it may be settled. But I assure you that as yet we remain in as profound an ignorance of what is to be as you do in the country. Sir Robert is created Earl of Orford, and is said to have a pension of £4,000 a-year. How far his retreat will be safe I cannot tell; most people think there will be some angry motions in Parliament—perhaps impeachments; but probably they will end in nothing. Mr. Pulteney has refused everything. He will continue, he says, a lover of his country, and do his utmost to support The Family and any good Administration. This is a great character, if he can persist in it. Most people think the Tories will get nothing by the change, but will be left in the lurch. No talk yet of a reconciliation between the King and Prince."[1]

Walpole's profuse style of living was made an excuse for the party cry of public plunder. His estate on entering political life was worth little more than £2,000 a-year; and this his early ambition had so dipped, that when out of office at the end of Queen Anne's reign, it was said by his enemies that few would lend him a hundred pounds on his own security. This could hardly have been true; but it is certain that he was somewhat embarrassed, and this may account for the fact that though he

[1] To Mr. Davies, a brother barrister, 6th Feb., 1742.

disapproved publicly of the South Sea Scheme, and did what he could to prevent its excessive inflation, he dabbled in its rising stock, made money, like others, of its transient popularity, and was eventually saved only by an accident from being overtaken in the storm. Twenty years would more than have sufficed, no doubt, to enable him to clear his patrimonial estate and to add many a field to field, to live hospitably in the old Manor House, and to keep in town such an establishment as befitted a Minister of State; to indulge in moderation his taste for pictures, and to leave a competency to his children; for he was, during many years, Chancellor and Under-Treasurer of the Exchequer, as well as First Lord of the Treasury, and had, besides, the Rangership of Richmond Park; while his relatives were provided for by gift of patent places for life. But all this did not content him. Of his original encumbrances he paid off none, and added to them considerably. His new house and grounds at Houghton cost an inordinate sum; and, besides the Lodge at Richmond, and the official residence in Downing Street, he had a house at Chelsea, and afterwards in Arlington Street, where he continually entertained. It is said that the highest price he ever gave for a picture was £640; and though his gallery contained many coveted works of art, French and Flemish, it must have absorbed, after all, but a very small portion of his income. He was by nature indolent and extravagant, sensual in his pleasures, and thoughtless for the future. His opponents, who had felt so long his political astuteness and foresight, could not be persuaded that in his private affairs he was not equally provident. Some gave out that he had invested large accumulations in the banks of Amsterdam and Genoa[1]; while others feared that even when driven to resign he would still stand behind the curtain, and through the influence of great fortune, and power of intrigue, make it very uneasy for those that might follow him. "Sir Robert," says Chesterfield, "is gone to his country seat loaded with the spoils and the hatred of the public"[2]: and Pultency, in one of his invectives, did not disdain to hold up to ridicule the water-works, and other embellishments at Houghton, as instances of a prodigality which could not have been supplied by "income of his estate, and the known salaries of his visible

[1] *Craftsman*, 28th November, 1730.

[2] Letter to his son.

employments. He seemed to have thought his triumph not complete unless he showed how little he regarded detection, and how much he despised the resentment of the nation."[1] His endowment of his family admitted of no dispute. His three sons held between them places and sinecures worth £14,900 a-year, which, being patent offices, no attempt was made to disturb. He himself had a retiring pension, which for a time he relinquished, and then resumed. Long afterwards, the possessor of Strawberry Hill amused the world by publishing a vindication of his share of his father's benefactions. "In my youth he gave me two little patent places, of Clerk of the Escheats and Comptroller of the Pipe, which, together, produce about or near £300 per annum. When nineteen, he gave me the place of Inspector of the Imports and Exports in the Custom House, which I resigned in about a year, on his giving me the patent place of Usher of the Exchequer, then reckoned worth £900 a-year. From that time I lived on my own income, and travelled at my own expense; nor did I during my father's life receive from him but £250 at different times; which I say, not in derogation of his extreme tenderness and goodness to me, but to show that I was content with what he had given me, and that from the age of twenty I was no charge to my family. George I. had bestowed on my father the patent place of Collector of Customs for his own life and for the lives of his two elder sons Robert and Edward; but my father reserved in himself a right of disposing of the income of that place as he should please during the existence of the grant. When he afterwards obtained for his eldest son Robert the great place of Auditor of the Exchequer, and for his second son Edward that of Clerk of the Pells, he bequeathed by an instrument under his hand, £1,000 a-year to me out of the patent for the remainder of the term, and devised the remainder, about £800 a-year, to be divided between my brother Edward and me. Though my position was much inferior to my brothers', still it was a noble fortune for a third son, and much beyond what I expected. The duty of my office is to shut the gates of the Exchequer, and to furnish paper, pens, ink, wax, sand, tape, pen-knives, scissors, parchment, and a great variety of other articles; to pay the bills of the workmen and tradesmen; and on those large profits are allowed to the Usher, whence my profit arises."

[1] Speech for removal of Walpole, 1741.

Before entering the House of Lords, Walpole obtained letters patent conferring the rank of an Earl's daughter upon his only child by Maria Skerritt, and nothing added more, it was said, to the exasperation of feeling against him than this last proof of his personal influence with the King.

Many attempts there have been to fabricate cheap but showy images of Walpole as entitled to historic gratitude as a great and good Minister; and if greatness consists in suffering commercial enterprise to grow fat, and agricultural industry to grow lean; art and literature to become half-starved, the Church establishment to be debased to the level of a working trade, and political morality to be regarded as a mere lingering superstition, he may be entitled to the epithet. But neither nationally nor socially can the claim be made out for Statesmanship entitling his memory to be held in grateful recollection. His Ministerial career began with the repression of one Scottish rebellion, and ended on the eve of one still more sanguinary. His Government is identified with the prevalence of rural distress in England so keen as to drive one of his oldest colleagues into secession and denunciation, and with the presence in Ireland of a famine more pitiless and unpitied, save one, that has ever afflicted that unhappy land. Without a pretence of religious zeal, the Cabinet of which he was the animating spirit, kept up the code of sectarian oppression, branded by the greatest political thinker of his time[1] as the most "fitted to obliterate in a people the best instincts of human nature itself that ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." When forced at length to relax his grasp of power, the good nature for which he was sometimes extolled showed itself chiefly in paternal solicitude for his natural children, his legitimate offspring having already been amply provided for at the public cost. A clergyman, eager for promotion, undertook in 1741 to marry one of the former, with a parochial dowry of £700 a-year; but on her father's fall he agreed, as compensation for breach of promise, to pay one year's income. To the father of the beautiful Maria Skerritt he was said to have paid £500 for the loss of her services; and by way of consoling her lover, the organist of the church, he proposed to have him made a Middlesex magistrate. A letter from the Chancellor, objecting, is highly characteristic.

[1] Edmund Burke.

As soon as Walpole's decision to retire became known, Newcastle desired to see the Leader of Opposition at the house of Andrew Stone. Pulteney declined, but offered to receive him at his own residence, if Carteret were present. The condition was accepted, and with the Chancellor the conference took place the same evening. His Grace stated that the King consented that Pulteney should be placed at the head of the Treasury. Instead of accepting the offer, the presumptive heir to the Leadership of the Commons proposed that Carteret should become First Lord. Nothing was determined, and, the fact of their having met being industriously circulated, surprise, distrust, and disappointment spread rapidly on both sides, while the friends of the falling Minister once more cherished hopes that in the clash of rival pretensions the victorious combination might possibly be dissolved. Carteret, clearly *facile princeps*, could not be expected to take secondary place in the new Cabinet, and Pulteney was naturally looked upon as the fittest man to be at the head of the Treasury. No one could be compared to him as a speaker in the Lower House, and no one possessed greater experience in financial affairs. Yet, for some reason never thoroughly explained, he hesitated in the hour of triumph to clutch the fruit of his long years of tantalisation and toil, and frankly preferred that Carteret should be entrusted with the duty of forming a new Cabinet. To this Sir Robert, still confidentially consulted by his Majesty, would not agree. His personal hatreds were not many, but they were implacable; and from the time that he had plotted the expulsion of his noble antagonist fifteen years before, his jealousy and aversion had never slept. A second conference, in the presence of the Prince of Wales, between the chiefs willing to come in, and those unwilling to go out, disclosed further difficulties. For Cobham and his cousins, as they were called, there was not room in the proposed coalition, and they were consequently not consulted. The Grenvilles and Lytteltons were incensed at such a slight, and Pitt forthwith declared himself to be, on high moral grounds, utterly opposed to the unpatriotic combination. Other sections who had indispensably aided in winning the battle were eloquent in indignation and despondent in the prospect of being left out. Had they, after all, been merely made use of? Was ever such inconsistency heard of, and what would the country say? In a new Parliament popular dis-

enchantment with high-flown professions signifies little, but it would seem as if the great orator, who had hitherto held his heterogeneous partisans together, could not stand the concentric reproaches that beset him; and in a fit of temper, affecting to rise superior to all intelligible Parliamentary motives, he announced, to the amazement of all, his resolve not to take any office whatever. Though it should be admitted that personal pique and party resentment were among the motives which inflamed his long course of opposition, he was credited with being a sincere friend to the Constitution, and as a man of wealth he would probably construct measures that might beget disorder and unhinge authority. Why not concede his chief demands, let there be as few changes as possible, introduce not too many questionable persons, and discountenance retrospective interrogation? The scheme might be put so plausibly on lines of Sir Robert's tracing that Pulteney, by degrees, might take them for his own.

A remarkable letter above the signature of Walpole, but about the authenticity of which doubt exists, is said to have been addressed to the King at this critical juncture, advising him not to discard the great Tribune, or drive him once more to resort to a vehement agitation. If Majesty would but send for him, tell him he was indispensable to the public good, and offer him a Peerage, great ease and comfort might thereby ensue to all concerned.[1] A well-known exclamation of the ejected Minister, when Pulteney, after long hesitation, actually fell into the snare spread for him, tends to confirm the verity of this strange epistle. Having quitted the House of Commons himself, he could not feel easy at leaving his rival there in undisputed mastery, but, as junior Members of the Upper House, they would once more be equals. It was a signal proof of the value Walpole set upon the ability and independence of Pelham that he should have in this crisis urged his appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer, notwithstanding the recent differences between himself and the Duke of Newcastle. Pelham was flattered at the offer, and it was not in the nature of his Grace to thwart him if he should accept; but he shrank from undertaking the Leadership of the Lower House while Pulteney remained, and for aught he could tell might continue to remain, its undisputed master in debate.

[1] Burke's "Dormant Peerages."

Waller claimed the precedency for himself as, next to Pulteney, best entitled to it; but Pulteney disappointed him, having already led Sandys to expect it.

At a second conference held at Lord Carteret's, Wilmington was named as First Lord of the Treasury, probably by Hardwicke at the desire of the King; and on the other hand Winchilsea was proposed for the Admiralty with Granard and Chetwynd for Junior Lords. The rumour of these suggestions getting wind, created much dissatisfaction. Sandys, Rushout, Gybbon, and Compton were believed to be acting under the guidance of Carteret in the attempt to form a coalition with the Pelhams and their friends in office. A public meeting was hastily called together at the Fountain in the Strand, where the bulk of the victorious party met, Carteret not deigning to attend. Argyll complained, on behalf of the Tories, whose advocate he had never professed to be before, that there was no intention of giving them a share of the spoils they had helped so materially to win; and taunted Pulteney with clandestine approaches to the remnants of the shattered Ministry. Pulteney proudly replied that overtures had been made to him and not by him; that the inclusion of Tories in office would come, but it must be a work of time; and that their admission would greatly depend upon themselves. Sandys avowed his acceptance of the offer that had been made to him. If he did not take the second seat at the Treasury somebody else would, and if nobody else it must be left to the choice of former officials. The meeting, though angry, could not be brought to agree, and some days later another conference was held in presence of the Prince of Wales, without any definite result. Meanwhile, negotiations were actively carried on between Newcastle and Hardwicke on the one side, and Carteret and Pulteney on the other, with a view to settle the basis on which joint action might be maintained. Though heartily glad to be delivered from an exacting master, Walpole's colleagues had served him, if not wisely, too well, to make the contemplation agreeable of a vindictive inquiry into his alleged misdeeds. If a party majority should declare, as they had done in the case of Harley, that he had betrayed the best interests of the nation, how were they to be exonerated from the charge of having been accomplices after, if not before, the fact? Carteret was ready to repudiate all recriminatory proceedings, and he proved, when

brought to the test, that he would not abet them. It was not Walpole's blood, but his places, that he wanted. It was easier for him to forgive his adversary now that he was overthrown than for the adversary to pardon him. Pulteney, who had no intention of incurring responsibility in person for the conduct of the future Administration, took loftier ground, and disdained making any conditions; but he gave it to be understood that neither did he contemplate vindictive or penal inquiry. Pulteney's position became inextricably embarrassing, for he had virtually been admitted to the Cabinet, while practically his party forsook his lead. The dangerous illness of his daughter kept him at home, and precluded urgent interrogation for some time, and when Lord Limerick, at the head of more than 240 accusers, demanded a Committee of Secrecy to overhaul the conduct of the late Ministry for the past twenty years, they only escaped, after a long debate, by a majority of two. Pulteney and Sandys were absent.

Pulteney's explanations failed to satisfy Argyll, who insisted that the combination to overthrow Walpole had been founded on professions of desire for coalition; and although he was himself named Commander of the Forces in Scotland, and Master-General of the Ordnance, he could not agree to the continued exclusion of nearly every Tory from the direction of affairs. He specially demanded an office in the Household for Sir John Hynde Cotton, who was known to have rendered himself particularly obnoxious to the King, and the demand being peremptorily refused, he once more resigned.[1] His last appearance in the Lords was for a Bill to indemnify anyone who could substantiate the charges of maladministration alleged against Lord Orford.[2] He withdrew thenceforth from affairs, and died in the following year.

In the negotiations which took place for the formation of a new Ministry, Sandys had been named as one of the men who would fitly impersonate the interest and feelings of county Members. They were impatient at what they termed the jugglery of officialism, and wished for a straightforward, outspoken owner of broad acres, who cared nothing for office, would set his face against jobs, and keep a sharp eye over the rogues who fattened on public spoil. His own account of the bewilderment of Oppo-

[1] 10th March. [2] May, 1742.

sition on the morrow of their triumph may be gathered from his private notes, written from memory twenty years later. It was proposed that he should have the second seat at the Board of Treasury, which he eventually obtained. "This took up some evenings' debate, sometimes at Lord Carteret's, sometimes at Mr. Pulteney's, I constantly refusing to act under Lord Wilmington, as a tool of Sir Robert Walpole's. We should not have the whole power, but it would revert again into the same hands, in which I proved a true prophet. Mr. Pulteney excused himself, partly out of indolence, and partly out of a scruple that he had in public inadvertently vowed Sir Robert Walpole's destruction, and had frequently declared he would accept of no employment, though later he was greatly encouraged to persist in by persons who expected great preferment from him, and wrought bitterly afterwards against him for not assisting them when they had advised him against the very measure by which he would have been enabled to answer their expectations. When this would not do I desired Lord Carteret might be at the head of the Treasury, though much more fit for the place designed for him as Secretary of State, his Lordship having no knowledge of the revenue, nor the House of Commons—two things absolutely necessary to be at the head of affairs; but these things I thought I could make out. I thought his Lordship could manage the King, to whom I was an utter stranger, unless by report for a behaviour (tho' in many things false) not at all agreeable to his Majesty. At all these meetings there were present the Duke of Newcastle, his brother, Mr. Pelham, and generally, the Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke. To these we were supposed to be allied. I soon found Lord Carteret was not relished by any of them, not even by Mr. Pulteney, on whom I wholly relied, like the dog in the manger, who would not suffer another to act, though he would not himself. Indeed, I always found throughout all the opposition I was engaged in with Mr. Pulteney, such a secret attachment to the Pelhams, especially to the younger, that I could hardly sometimes bear it. And I attributed this opposition to the scheme then laid, and which after took place: to put the power wholly into the Pelhams. But I could not help myself, I was at last after many days' struggle obliged to submit to be Chancellor of the Exchequer and second Commissioner of the Treasury with Lord Wilmington, I to choose the other Commissioners."

Sandys thus recounts his initiation into Cabinet life: "His Majesty in his closet delivered to me the Seals of the Exchequer. I met Sir Robert Walpole in his chariot leaving the Court as I came to it. His Majesty seemed disconcerted at seeing me, and trembled much. I kissed his hand as soon as I came into his presence, before any words passed. He said he had sent for me to give me the Seals of the Exchequer. He was told that I was a person of firmness and resolution, and that I was true and faithful in what I engaged in, that I had always strenuously opposed his measures, but that he hoped I was now come to him with other dispositions, and that that firmness I had always shown would now be employed in his service. I said some things to excuse my former conduct, and assured his Majesty I was come fully determined to serve him truly and faithfully; of which his Majesty could not help showing some doubt. He questioned me much about the elections in which I was thoroughly engaged, contrary to his inclinations, then at other times saying, 'What, must all my friends be given up?' There was one I told his Majesty was not engaged, which proved to be a person he had been mad to affront, but I told him the reason—that it was a bad cause. He treated that as a jest, saying, 'Phew.' I then left him without kissing his hand after receiving the Seals, as a friend of mine, a man of form, told me I ought to have done. However, a day or two after, I kissed his Majesty's hand in public, with the rest of the Board of Commissioners of the Treasury. The evening after I received the Seals I took the oaths of office before my Lord Chancellor. I was pressed to exercise my office by setting the Seal to work before I was sworn, as it was the last day of term and business was postponed; but my Lord Chancellor advised me not, and expedited my patent to cause as little delay as possible. I continued in this office full of uneasiness till the 22nd of December, 1743, when I resigned the Treasury on being made a Peer and Cofferer of the Household, which I was promised I should be continued in, to enable me to support my new dignity."[1] While Pulteney declined any place for himself, he made it a point that certain of his friends should have office. Furnese, M.P. for New Romney, a staunch supporter, was accordingly made Secretary of the Treasury; and Legge was dropped into the Surveyorship

[1] Lord Sandys' Mem.—*MS.*

of Woods, etc., with less salary, but less to do. John Scrope had hitherto had the charge of the secret service money, £1,052,210 a-year, about the application of which he stoutly refused to be examined when the Oath of Discovery was put to him, unless he had special leave from the King; and the accusers of Walpole not being prepared, while the new Administration was forming, to risk a refusal, waived further inquiry and acquiesced in his keeping his post. 'Mr. Scrope was the only man,' said Pulteney, 'that thoroughly understood the business of the Treasury; on this foundation he stood secure, and was immovable as a rock.'"[1]

During Walpole's long reign at Whitehall no one had served him more faithfully and efficiently than the Member for Lyme Regis. Through his half-hidden hand passed the greater number of the furtive payments made to agents foreign and domestic, Parliamentary and parochial, of high and low degree. The filaments of this subtle web of influence impalpable to common sight, often costly, often frail, spread far and near; and were continually liable to be broken or exposed without the reparative touch of a skilful hand. The transformed Ministry felt as much in need as the former of his daily intervention, intimate knowledge of the weakness and worthlessness of public men, and impenetrable reserve regarding them. Scrope quietly attorned to the new possessors of power, and kept his seat and his place until his death ten years later. Sir C. Wager alone of Walpole's colleagues resigned with him; and he was subsequently made Treasurer of the Navy.

Wilmington and Newcastle wished to secure the retention of those colleagues who were least obnoxious to the victors, and whose fidelity might be most depended on. To make way for Carteret, Harrington was named Lord President, and to make room for Argyll at the Ordnance, Montagu was offered the Admiralty. The veteran Duke, however, declined a post for which he felt himself to be unfit. He had served the King with fidelity and zeal, as well before he came to the Crown as since, and would continue to do so, provided it was in a post of which he understood the business. That of Master-General was one which he felt himself capable of executing, and he hoped he had acquitted himself in it without reproach. He

[1] To the Duke of Bedford, 5th July, 1742.

knew himself unfit for the Admiralty, and therefore refused it. But if the King should think fit to make again such an officer, who should, by virtue of his office, be a Cabinet Councillor, he would serve with pleasure, as he believed himself capable of it. "If not, he would submit to his fate, with this comfort, that though he was dropped as an insignificant wreck by those whom he once thought his friends, he knew he did not deserve it." [1]

His project was laughed at, and the opportunity seized for introducing another member of the Pelham connection into the Cabinet. Lord Winchilsea was placed at the head of the navy, with Lord Baltimore and Lady Archibald Hamilton's husband as Junior Lords, to represent the Prince's household. For Sir J. Hynde Cotton and Mr. Pitt there was thus hardly room. Henry Pelham held fast to the profitable Paymastership of the Forces.

Bishop Sherlock used the freedom permitted him to warn his patron of the rekindling discontent with Government. Jonah had been thrown overboard, but the waters were not calmed. Niggardly concessions of office made to Opposition seemed in the vulgar eye to amount to little more than buying off the hostility of half-a-dozen of the openest-mouthed assailants. Sherlock, identifying himself unreservedly with the Pelhams, urged substantial coalition, which, being interpreted, meant a slice of power worth having for the Tories, in recognition of their renovated strength in Parliament. He had hoped something would be done during the Easter recess to allay the present heats. All who wished well to the Government conceived the same hope, and if nothing of the kind appeared, he believed that the King's best friends would be the persons most disappointed; when all was at stake all must be ventured. The ferment must soon abate or it must soon break out. One saw the temper of the people, what addresses, what instructions were sent to Members. What would be the case if an impeachment were threatened? Would not the eyes of the Kingdom be turned upon the Lords, would not the same inflamed spirit, which called upon the Commons to accuse, be loud in demanding justice of the Peers? And should this be accompanied by riotous gatherings and by tumults,

[1] To Newcastle, 17th February, 1742.—*MS.*

they would find themselves in the same case their ancestors were in a century before.[1]

On the other hand, there were many who were for keeping the Whig preserve strictly. Lord Tankerville wrote that he was ready at all times to back the continuing Ministers with his vote, and to resist any attack on Sir Robert. "Let us be united, and keep out the Jacobites. We can do without them, but I am sure we can never do long with them."[2] Distraction in the ranks of Opposition became every day more fruitful of embarrassment. Among the more moderate, no two agreed upon what was necessary, some thinking that all security lay in a good Place Bill, about the degree and extent of which they differed. Some were for a Pension Bill, which others justly thought would signify nothing. Some were for Triennial Parliaments, which others thought dangerous and dubious; some called for Annual Parliaments, as the real old thing; some for exemplary justice on the deposed Minister; others against party revenge; some for a reduction of the Civil List, which others felt bound to leave intact, having been given by statute; some for divesting the Executive of all patronage, without which others feared the wheels of State would not quietly go round.[3]

Berkeley, in his Episcopal seclusion at Cloyne, marked with interest the course of events. A correspondent, whom he described as a considerable hand, writing from the midst of intrigue and faction, told him that though Whigs and Tories had gone hand-in-hand to pull down the old Administration, when it came to erecting a new one they could hardly be brought to combine. Some of the former insisted on excluding all Tories from high office. Lord Wilmington and the Dukes of Bedford, Dorset, and Argyll, refused to have any hand in building on so narrow a basis; and the Prince of Wales held out firmly for a coalition. For a time no accord seemed possible, but at length the difficulties were got over, and it was resolved to form a Cabinet without any First Minister. Berkeley had long dreamt of such a combination, and hoped it would prevail, for it held out the only hope of the unsectarian policy for Ireland he had so long cherished in his lonely meditations.[4]

[1] Bishop of Salisbury to Newcastle, 25th April, 1742.—*MS.*

[2] Tankerville to Newcastle. From Up Park, 22nd May, 1742.—*MS.*

[3] Faction detected by Lord Perceval, M.P. for Westminster.

[4] Berkeley to T. Prior, 26th February, 1742.

The Cabinet as remodelled contained:

POTTER	*Archbishop*
WILMINGTON	*Treasury*
HARDWICKE	*Chancellor*
HARRINGTON	*President*
HERVEY	*Privy Seal*
NEWCASTLE AND CARTERET ...	*Secretaries of State*
DEVONSHIRE	*Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland*
GRAFTON	*Chamberlain*
PULTENEY	*Leader of the Commons* (without office)
DORSET	*Lord-Steward*
RICHMOND	*Master of Horse*
MONTAGU	*Ordnance*
CARTERET	*Secretary of State*
WINCHILSEA	*Admiralty*
SANDYS	*Chancellor of the Exchequer*
PELHAM	*Paymaster*
TWEEDDALE	*Secretary for Scotland*

Carteret stipulated that his cousin, Lord Gower, who was father-in-law to the Duke of Bedford, should have the Privy Seal, but failed to obtain it for him until some months later, when Hervey reluctantly resigned.

Lord Bathurst became Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners; Lord Palmerston, who sat for Weobly, had the reversion; and, after him, Lord Limerick, M.P. for Tavistock. Henry Vane, of Raby, M.P. for Ripon, was made Vice-Treasurer of Ireland; Lord Cobham was given a regiment of Guards, with the rank of Field-Marshal, to heal the affront put upon him by Walpole; and Lord Stair, with the same distinction, was sent as Envoy to the States-General. William Finch, M.P. for Cockermouth, succeeded Lord Sidney Beauclerk as Vice-Chamberlain; and Edward Finch, who sat for Cambridge University, was made Groom of the Bedchamber. The Duke of Bolton was made Governor of the Isle of Wight and Keeper of the New Forest, with a pension of £2,000 a-year.

Hanbury Williams, whose pasquinades had contributed to the result, was jostled aside in the scramble; and, somewhat improvidently, nothing was given to still his love of provoking

laughter. In profane parody he gave an account of the "break-up" and of the "break-in": "All these things came to pass, that the saying of the Prophet Jonathan might be fulfilled—those that are in shall be as those that are out, and those that are out as those that are in."

APPENDIX I.

TO SECRETARY CRAGGS.

"DUBLIN CASTLE, 25TH AUGUST, 1719.

"I have transmitted to the Lords Justices by this packet nine more of the public Bills, which will not, I believe, be found liable to many objections so as to take up much of your time. The Popery Bill as it came from the House of Commons inflicted no greater punishment on the priests of the Romish religion than that of burning on the cheek, but it being observed that when that punishment was exercised in this kingdom in other cases the rapparees in their robberies made it a common practice to brand innocent persons with that mark in order to destroy the distinction it was intended for, and that nothing less than a very severe punishment would be effectual to prevent the frequent arrival of priests here, it was thought proper by the Privy Council to deter them with the penalty of castration. If that be thought in England too severe, yet, as the Bill contains several very material clauses, and very beneficial to the Protestant interest, I cannot but think it very proper to be returned, whatever alterations may be made in that particular.—I am, with very great truth, your most obedient servant, BOLTON.—To Mr. Secretary Craggs."[1]

APPENDIX II.

ANNO QUARTO GEORGII REGIS.

AN ACT TO ENABLE HIS MAJESTY TO BE GOVERNOR OF THE SOUTH SEA COMPANY.

Whereas the King's most Excellent Majesty is duly Entitled to a Share amounting to Ten thousand Pounds of and in the Capital Stock

[1] Original *MS.*, Ir. St. Papers.—Record Office.

of the Governor and Company of Merchants of Great Britain, Trading to the South-Seas, and other Parts of America, and for Encouraging the Fishery: And whereas an humble Address hath been made to His Majesty by the said Company in a General Court of the same, That His Majesty would be Graciously pleased to Honour the said Company by being their Governor; whereunto His Majesty being willing to Condescend, some Doubts have arisen or may arise touching the Qualifications and Duties prescribed by Law, or by the Charter Granted to the said Company, in relation to the Governors or Government thereof: For Obviating which Doubts, It is hereby Enacted and Declared by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament Assembled, and by Authority of the same, That His Majesty is and shall be Capable of being and of continuing Governor of the said Company for such time or times as are prescribed by the said Charter for the Continuance of any Governor therein.

And it is hereby Declared and Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Oaths prescribed by the said Charter, or by any Law now in Force, and all other Acts necessary or requisite to Qualifie a Subject of this Realm to be Governor of the said Company, cannot and shall not be Administred to His Majesty, or be necessary or requisite for His Majesty's Qualification in respect of the said Government (His Majesty's Share in the Capital Stock only excepted) and that His Majesty in all Cases where any Vote is to be given, or Act to be done by Him as Governor of the said Company, may (if His Majesty think fit) by any Warrant or Warrants under His Royal Sign Manual, appoint the Sub-Governor or Deputy-Governor of the said Company to Vote or Act for Him, or on His Behalf; Any former Law, Statute, or Provision to the contrary notwithstanding.[1]

[1] Original printed statutes of 1718 (many of them long since obsolete), Br. Mm. coll. Gen. Acts.

END OF VOL. I.

00035396

Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 20 February, 2020